

Special Features This Issue  
"The Old Star - In Search of the Tradewinds",  
"Building Kay - Polynesia in Pennsylvania",



# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 24 – Number 24

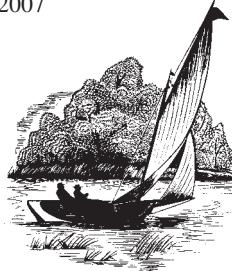
May 1, 2007



**messing  
about in  
BOATS**

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## On the Cover...

Reader J.J. Bohnaker sails his beloved old Star on Italy's Lake Garda many years ago shortly before he sold her. He tells us all about that transaction in this issue.

## Commentary...

**Bob Hicks, Editor**



This issue completes 24 years of publishing *Messing About in Boats*. I have now been turning out this magazine the same number of years that I did my prior two motorcycling magazines combined (they overlapped, 20 years of one, 14 of the other). It's now 48 years and counting, a half-century of small time mom-and-pop publishing is not far off. Yep, as we start our 25th year we also inch closer to 50 years overall in this business. This conjunction seems like maybe it ought to be some cause for celebration. Not yet for a while anyway as I have no idea of what form it might take.

In the 24 years now passed we have turned out 576 issues, starting with 16 pages and progressing through 24 and 32 to the 40 where it will remain for the rest of my publishing years. That's a lot of information and I am reminded of this as I process the ongoing requests we get for photocopies of bygone articles that internet surfers have stumbled across on our web site back issue index. As I look up these requested articles I skim through the issues and marvel at all the stuff that has appeared on our pages.

I have mentioned this index before but it is worth another mention now. In 1998 reader Dave Thibodeau, recently retired, volunteered to compile an index of articles from the then 375 or so issues extant. The idea boggled my mind but Dave was a computer addict and the challenge appealed to him. This was a pro bono effort on his part, thinking to help out not only me but readers looking for bygone information. The result was a stack of about 100 sheets of paper printed on both sides in small 10-point type all organized by subject matter. A really Herculean

effort by Dave and some of you owe him a thank you for my being able to supply to you copies of articles you have requested.

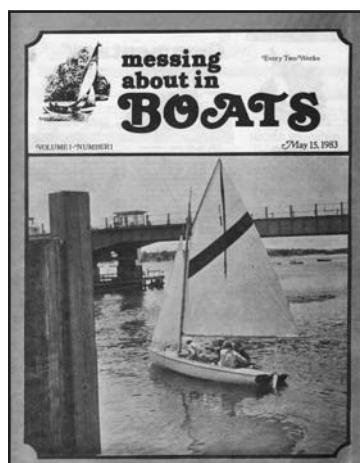
When Dave Watson of [bythesea.com](http://bythesea.com) undertook to include content from *MAIB* on his web site and subsequently set up a *MAIB* web site on its own, this index became part of that latter site and access was greatly enlarged, reaching out to the apparently thousands of web surfers who alight on our site at times (so Dave tells me).

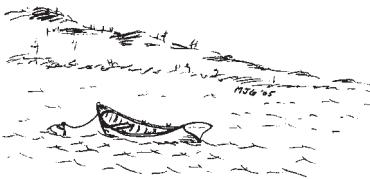
But since 1998 we have turned out about an additional 200 issues, none of which are in the index. I certainly do not have the time nor inclination to go back through 200 issues culling out all the articles and posting them in the appropriate categories in this index. Since supplying photocopies of articles does not bring in any significant income (the fee covers my time pulling back issues, flagging the requested articles, and lugging them to the copy shop to photocopy the articles requested), I cannot entertain the idea of paying someone to do the index update. Nor am I soliciting volunteers, it is just way too much work. One casualty of this is that I cannot locate any specific Robb White article, something that is requested from time to time.

Recently I heard from an internet surfer (email eventually gets to me more or less weekly when I see my daughter) who was not a reader who was interested in plywood boat construction and suggested we publish a book including all such articles. Typical of today's techie mindset, he assumed I could just go back through all 576 issues stored in my computer and print out such articles (!), and he even volunteered to compile the material for me as he was a disabled person with time hanging heavy on his hands.

I haven't responded to him yet as, like most emailers, he failed to include his U.S. Mail address and I do not use email (even though I do receive it indirectly). We have only the most recent year's issues still in the computer, all the back issues are in binders because they are the real thing we have produced. He suspected this might be the case when he remarked, "so, if say all this information was on disc or even on line (I hope it all isn't inside paper magazines, sigh...).

Given my attitude about preferring the real thing to an electronic copy, it is unlikely that there will ever be an up-to-date index of articles nor will there be any collections of articles published in book form such as the often suggested *The Best of Messing About in Boats*. Impossible, given the scale of this business and its finances.





## From the Journals of Constant Waterman

By Matthew Goldman

My sister used to own a condo on Sanibel Island, off the Gulf coast of Florida. Three miles of causeway and bridges connect it to Fort Myers. A sizeable island, it caters mostly to tourists but, having a four-story building limit, it hasn't the feel of high-rise Fort Myers Beach across the bay. The broad sandy beaches abound in shells. One can find conches, sand dollars, sea urchins, murex, whelks, augurs, donax, and sundials. But you mustn't take the shells of living creatures.

People who fish can surf cast or charter boats. The lighthouse at the southeast end of the island, an old steel structure built in the 1880s, marks shoaling beaches. I watched some fellows in waist deep water casting and casting and casting. "What is it you're after," I asked one.

"Stripers," he said. "They come in here all the time."

"You mean like these?" I queried. Four fat stripers swirled about him as he frantically cranked his reel. One of them passed between his legs. Each was as long as my arm. They disappeared before he had finished swearing. What had he planned to do, I wondered. Maybe dangle the lure between his legs? I left him muttering inane imprecations, did he really think that fish's mother could bark?

Further along, more accomplished fishermen read the water. Egrets and curlews and flocks of squeaking turnstones stalked little fish and crustaceans along the foreshore. Terns and pelicans plunged in the sea incessantly and cormorants and their cousins, the anhingas, surface dove and swam after scaly prey.

My sister's condominium edged the canal. Her deck, on which I enjoyed my early coffee, overhung the water. This canal provided a home for several small alligators, most less than 7' long. A gallinule, or moorhen, stalked the muddy banks in search of breakfast, clucking her chronic discontent with the world. A stately anhinga swam and dived, then perched in a bush and spread her wings to dry. Each morning an osprey groomed herself on the same limb of a huge willow overhanging the water.

Occasionally a 'gator would slowly swim to the deck in hopes that I might trail my toes in the water. Fortunately my toes are too well disciplined to swim without my permission. A variety of wildlife abounded, except for the larger mammals. I never saw any more formidable than a corpulent New Yorker in yellow shorts.

One day I sauntered down to the beach for a swim. Little geckos scuttled out of my shady path beneath the shady willows. Beyond, the bountiful May sun kept busy burning the brilliant sands. As I waded out beyond the bar a number of fish bumped against my legs but I couldn't see what they looked like for the glare. I swam for a while and encountered still more fish. When I waded ashore an elderly lady in a white linen suit and a broad straw hat awaited me anxiously.

"You really shouldn't wade out there with all of those stingrays," she said to me.

"All of those what!?" I exclaimed.

"They've begun to breed," she informed me. "They've come inshore."

And so they had. I shaded my eyes against the glare. Hundreds and hundreds of little rays schooled in the lucid water.

"We sent one chap to the hospital just last year," she continued. "If he'd been as skinny as you, he might have made it." I shivered a bit, it wasn't as warm as I'd thought.

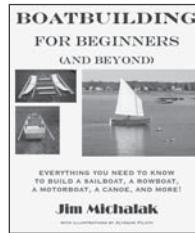
"They won't bother you when you swim," she explained. "Only when you wade."

I thought of the hundred yards I'd just been slogging across the shoals.

"You need to shuffle your feet," she said. "That way you nudge them out of your way when they stop to rest on the bottom. It's only when you plant your foot on their backs that they whip their tails about and sting your leg."

Peering both ways I saw the shallow water roil as far as I could see. I thanked her for her advice and spent the rest of my morning collecting shells. Look at this huge helmet shell. It was propping open a door on Middle Gulf Drive.

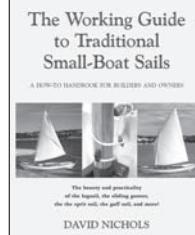
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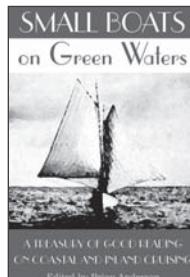
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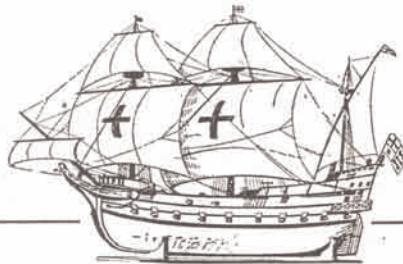
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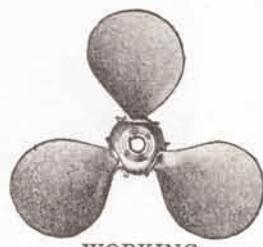
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# Tale of an Historic Adirondack Guideboat and How to Build One

By Dr. Gordon L. Fisher  
Copyright 2006 by Dr. Gordon L. Fisher  
Printed by Aztec Copies, Inc.  
Softcover 129 pages

Reviewed by Rodger Swanson

"He who is first into the breach is often the first casualty." (Rudolph Clifton Swanson, USMC Veteran and student of military history).

Dr. Fisher might have wanted to talk things over with Uncle Rudy before writing and publishing this book. But maybe not. Gordon is a pretty determined guy.

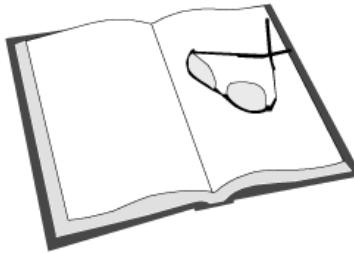
There are probably more guideboats (and/or guideboat derivatives) on the water now than during the type's heyday. There has not, however, been a corollary output of articles and books about the type and its construction. Until Michne and Olivette's manual on strip building the *Virginia* came out last year, Will and Helen Durant's *The Adirondack Guideboat* (1986) had been about the only game in town (and it's not a construction manual). A notable exception was Howard Ford's article "The Adirondack Guideboat" in *WoodenBoat* magazine's September/October 1977 issue. This article comprised the only treatise specifically related to building a traditionally constructed guideboat until now.

But first a bit of background. The Fisher's built a summer home on Long Lake in the Adirondacks in 1989, at which time Gordon became enamored of their neighbor's original guideboat, the *Queen Anne*, built by Caleb Chase. His infatuation with guideboats in general and the *Queen Anne* in particular sent him on a quest for a traditionally built guideboat of his own. Finding that the cost of either an original or a custom reproduction was beyond his means, he set about to build one himself. This he ultimately accomplished. After building a second, he decided to share his hard-won knowledge and authored this book, no mean feat in itself.

His two-fold purpose is to highlight the historical background of the *Queen Anne* and to provide the information necessary for the building of a traditionally constructed replica of her.

*Tale of an Historic Adirondack Guideboat* is an interesting combination of historical treatise, journal, daybook, and construction manual. Dr. Fisher has an exuberant writing style and clearly loves every aspect of his subject. Such enthusiasm can be contagious. It can also lead to a few problems, as we shall see.

He goes to some lengths in describing how Caleb Chase adapted his guideboat design to accommodate changing usage and market conditions and keep his boat building business profitable for a substantial number of years. A section on the "Great Camps" and commentary on the development of recreational boating in the Adirondacks provides the context. This kind of information, particularly as it relates to a specific builder, is not easily come by and has value in its own right. I do part company with him on the implications of the term cranky but leave you to your own opinion on the matter.



## Book Review

What Caleb Chase did, in effect, was to modify a type of craft originally made to order for sale to professional guides into a form that retained the visual elegance that was a signature feature of guideboats while making them more user friendly for novice rowers. While still possessing excellent rowing qualities, they were, in essence, a form of livery boat. To accomplish this, Chase broadened the beam a bit, flattened the floors, and imparted a more gentle turn to the bilge. In keeping with the livery environment, structural components (especially the ribs and gunwales) were more robust. The added weight wasn't detrimental. The livery boats were used off docks and didn't have to be portaged. For the most part, the same scenario applied at the Great Camps that had some of his boats in their flotillas.

Having set the stage, so to speak, Dr. Fisher makes a pitch for building a traditionally constructed guideboat vs. utilizing more modern techniques and materials. This is essentially a "preaching to the choir" venture. Both camps have their staunch adherents and defection rates are low. Not surprisingly, he makes a strong pitch for building a replica of the *Queen Anne*.

It's at this point that we hit a few snags. In my opinion, the book's primary deficit is a lack of a lines drawing and a conventionally laid out table of offsets. Unless one has had the opportunity to directly inspect an actual boat built to a particular design, I don't think anyone should set about to build to that design without these references, especially not a craft as complex as a guideboat.

In doing this review I had the advantage of having at hand lines and offsets for several different guideboats. My office has a drafting table. Extrapolating from photos in the text and doing a bit of drafting from the offsets provided (there are offsets, they're just laid out in a format Gordon devised on his own), I was able to make a fair assessment of the hull form of the *Queen Anne*. In sum, her shape is very like that of J. Henry Rushton's Saranac Laker (which, by the way, was designed to appeal to the same market Chase focused on). Compared to the Grant-built *Virginia*, the *Queen Anne* has a broader beam, flatter floors, a bit more slack in the bilge, and is built to more robust scantlings. Most readers don't have these resources literally within arm's reach and shouldn't have to resort to them even if they do.

This being said, I can understand how Dr. Fisher laid his book out as he did because he was kind enough to spend a substantial amount of time on the phone discussing it. As he describes in the book, his experience with the sequence of actions he followed in

the building process led him to distill out what he thought would be most important for a would-be builder to know.

In point of fact, most original guideboats were built using patterns. Gordon followed this principle. He made patterns and built the boats from them. In the process of so doing he became intimately familiar with every nuance of the hull's form. I don't think it dawned on him that someone coming totally fresh to this challenge would need the added conceptual perspective a good set of lines would provide.

As for the text relating to the actual building process, I give him high marks for his sections on wood selection (including citing where quarter sawn material is and isn't required), tools and equipment required, an interesting discussion of traditional fixed-pin guideboat oars vs. oars that can be feathered, and an innovative adjustable form for fabricating the rib laminations. His advice on how to finish out the boat is sound. He follows much the same process and sequence that Howard Ford did in his endeavor back in the 1970s and the results in both cases are very creditable boats.

I don't, however, believe that a person could build a boat all that easily with this as their only written reference. There aren't quite enough photos and diagrams to really provide clear visuals to help one get through the process. Certainly the additional texts he recommends would be most helpful. At a minimum I'd recommend also that one obtain a copy of Michne and Olivette's *Building an Adirondack Guideboat: Wood Strip Reproductions of the Virginia* as an added resource in getting to the point where planking is applied.

I am very firm in my opinion that one ought not to try this as their first boat. It's just too complicated for most of us mere mortals to tackle as our maiden venture. Build something smaller and simpler first. But build something that requires planking. This is one time a strip-built boat isn't that good as a prelude project. Nor is it a stitch-and-glue a good pick either. Glued lapstrake (using the building jig approach) would be close enough for government work. I'd recommend, for example, Tom Hill's lovely little Charlotte or one of Walt Simmons' very attractive double-paddle designs. These are not "instant boats" by any stretch but would provide one with the experience base needed without an inordinate investment of time and materials.

And find someone with more experience than yourself to help mentor you through the tough spots. Gordon did this himself and benefited tremendously.

So yes, if you're already taken up into the lore and lure of guideboats (or think you might be), I recommend purchasing this book.

Re Lines: There are not currently many available. The Adirondack Museum offers a 13' Grant Guideboat, a 13' Blanchard Guideboat (also available from Mystic Seaport), a 16' Grant Guideboat Ghost, and a 16' Warren "Long Lake" Guideboat.

Lines and offsets for Grant's *Virginia* are included in both the Durant and the Michne and Olivette books referred to above. Hallie Bond of the Adirondack Museum is in hopes that a special on-site project that may commence this summer will add the lines and offsets of an additional number of boats in the museum's collection reasonably soon (dependent on adequate funding, staffing and other resource allocation realities). We wish her best of luck in this endeavor.

We'd left the harbor at Desenzano del Garda a bit later than planned and now, after three hours of sailing, we still had at least another hour of the 12-mile trip before us. We were leaving the big southern bay and entering the more narrow part of Lake Garda that eventually works north between high mountain ranges. A gloomy dusk created by the dark mountains on both sides loomed before us and the cool of the coming evening drifted over the deep blue water. The breeze had been contrary and light all afternoon and we seemed to be behind schedule. At that time, schedules in Italy were generally ignored anyway and instead of being concerned with a schedule, I ruminated over the dying light reflected from the small wavelets, little waves that hid the enormous depths below my keel. Somewhere near this location the lake was said to be over a thousand feet deep. I wondered what kind of strange creatures might swim in those depths.

I was delivering my old Star to her final destination, at least final for me. The new owner would be waiting sometime between 8:00 and 9:00 at a "Ristorante/Bar" in the harbor of Maderno, an ancient town on the eastern shore, a little less than halfway up this enchanted lake. He was supposed to fork over 900,000 lira (about \$1,450 at that time) and I would give him a bill of sale. We would seal the deal with a good meal and a bottle of wine. There was a catch, however, and I was trying to plan my strategy.

## The Old Star

By J.J. Bohnaker

Two weeks earlier the buyer had come to Desenzano where the Star was moored to check it out with a casual survey. He had heard about the boat being for sale from a friend who lived in Desenzano. Fortunately his little pick failed to penetrate the new mahogany bottom planks I recently had a boatwright replace. Actually, I had the whole bottom replaced, a strange story in itself. However, I told him I had decided to clean up the old dirty sails and thus they could not be inspected at that moment because they had been taken away to be washed. He accepted my description, old cotton sails, yellowed and stained, somewhat blown out and definitely not competitive, but still useable. He was charmed with the boat and made me an offer and after a great deal of haggling we agreed on the aforementioned price.

Later my wife and I washed the old sails in the tub and, as my wife said, it was not a smart thing to do nor was it an easy task. We had to get help as we struggled with the wet monster to suspend it from the second story window and a post in the driveway to finish draining and dry. The neighbors looked askance at our queer laundry line. When it had drained enough and was light enough to carry down to the boat, I raised it to finish drying. I ran it up the mast and it looked

clean and white but to my chagrin, it had shrunk by almost two feet. I sailed with it anyway, hoping to stretch it back into shape but I had little luck. The old sail liked its new shape. It would take lots of time to stretch it back again.

Because of the shrunken sail I was prepared to knock, say, 60,000 lira (\$100) off the price, which seemed to me like an awful expensive wash job. Sometimes you're better off leaving things as they are.

As for the bottom, about six months after I bought the Star, I loaned her to a friend, Jim, when I was off for a week on a business trip. When I returned I didn't see the Star in the slip so I gave him a call:

"Hi Jimmy... how did you enjoy the Star?"

There was a long silence. "Uh... Uh... Oh, thanks, it was great. I was just going to call you..."

"Well, that's nice. By the way, where is the boat?"

There was another significant pause. "uh, she kind of sank."

Jim was always the joker. "Yeah, sure. Really, where is it? I went down to the slip, but she wasn't there."

"Well... she's uh, kind of on the bottom of the lake." He sounded awful subdued. I was beginning to believe he wasn't kidding.

"You are kidding... right?"

"I'm real sorry, you know, but she really sank. It wasn't my fault. When the wind piped up the bottom just about fell out of her. Joanie bailed and I sailed as fast as I could, heeled way over, to the nearest harbor... Bardolino. The cockpit was almost full of water when we got to the dock. She sank at the dock before we could get a line on. We did get the sails off her but we had to swim to the dock ladder!"

After recovering from the shock I vowed never to loan my boat out again and went to Bardolino. All I saw was the top of the mast. The good people at the harbor had a floating derrick and they raised the boat for me. I patched the bottom and slowly towed her to Desenzano, had her hauled and a new mahogany bottom put on. I had topsides and deck surveyed and they seemed to be okay.

It turned out that the bottom was rotten, the planks so soft I could almost punch my finger through. I had failed to find that out when I bought her, the bottom seemed so dry and firm when I tapped it with a little hammer. I guess I wanted the boat so badly, I didn't hear what I should have heard. I decided maybe I could loan my boat out again. It really wasn't Jim's fault.

The wind stayed light as we inched towards Maderno. My friend Rolf Shaeffer was sailing his 151 racing dinghy, joining me on this delivery so we could sail back in his boat. I was about a quarter mile ahead of him. Even with the shrunken sail the Star moved swiftly in the light air. I had become used to the old girl and felt big pangs of remorse as we came closer to our destination. I had owned her for about 18 months and she was already a 15-year-old boat when I bought her. At the time she had tired blue paint and a torn and dirty canvas deck.

I sanded off the old paint and put on a few fresh coats of glossy black marine enamel and a new, spiffy cream-colored canvas deck. I had the monster mast pulled and varnished it, as well as the boom. She looked wonderful for her age and I used her mostly as a truly exciting daysailer. The orig-



View of Lake Garda looking north from Desenzano.

The old harbor at Desenzano.



inal cotton sails had seen better days but I liked the way they glowed in the setting sun, and when the wind was light I would take wife and kids out for an evening sail since we lived just five minutes from the harbor. We had a fine time with that boat. Being on a boat on Lake Garda was and is truly one of the finest things a person can do.

I only raced her once and I did that only as a favor to the local yacht club. I belonged to the club because it was the only way I could get a space in the harbor. Their only racing Star had been knocked out of commission in pre-race practice runs, (broken mast and torn out running backstay tracks) but they wanted to have an entry in the upcoming International Regatta. I resisted, they insisted. But my old Star was tired, waterlogged from sitting in the harbor and, with the old cotton sails, couldn't begin to keep up with new, trailer born German machines that came down from Kiel to sweep the event. We got a DNF when the final cannon was fired. The Yacht club members thought it was hilarious.

There is nothing like sailing a Star non-competitively when you have time to enjoy the pure sensation of moving so quickly and quietly on the water. With an easy hand on the sheet and that big main she'll just lay over softly almost on her beam ends in the gusts, always sure, always coming back up (I hoped) on her own, and when one watches this Star performance from the shore it seems like watching a giant butterfly with great white wings. With those raised bows Stars make that great soft slapping, swishing sound as they slip like greyhounds through the waves, fending off all challenges from father Neptune.

It's all quite different from racing a Star, which seems to me at times like utter madness. Of course, there are those who thoroughly enjoy that madness. Attitude means everything when it comes to enjoying a boat.

I reached the harbor at Maderno just as the harbor lights were coming on and Rolf showed up a while later. I gasketed the shrunken main around the boom so I could show it to the buyer, gave the deck a few last caressing wipes, and we were off to keep the rendezvous.

The colorful harbor was busy, filled with boats of every description from barrel-back Chris Crafts and slick Rivas to sailboats of every type and small working fishing boats with drying nets stretched from boat to boat. Several fishermen were rowing boats standing with heavy counterbalanced oars, going out to set the nets. The harbor shops were getting ready for the evening crowds, setting up tables outside for dinner where one could eat a handsome feast while enjoying the setting sun, glowing pink and yellow off the snowy peaks across the lake. We took a table, ordered a drink, and awaited the arrival of the buyer.

He arrived an hour late. He seemed a bit preoccupied as I walked with him the short distance to the Star. He proceeded to give her another cursory inspection. "Bella barca," he said. "Bella barca!" I started to tell him about the shrunken sail but he interrupted me, "But this boat, you see, she's very old, she's very old," he continued in Italian. He smiled, sort of an evil smile and I think I must have visibly winced at his next words. "She's not really worth what you're asking. She's only worth, well... maybe 500,000 lira..." Of course, that really raised my dander and I told him what he could do with the new offer.

I told him it was downright uncivilized to change the offer at this point, after I had taken the trouble to deliver the boat. I told him I wouldn't sell the boat for less than 900,000. I would just take her back with me.

He made wild gestures with his hands and told me of his many financial problems, his great poverty, and his willingness, perhaps, to pay a bit more, say 550,000, even though certain people would have to go hungry. He gave me that evil smile again.

I told him I understood his problems but that we already had made an agreement on the price. However, I wanted to be reasonable, I would let him have her for 870,000 lira.

"Eight hundred seventy thousand?" he cried. "Eighty hundred seventy! I can't afford that much! I didn't realize that boat was so old (not true, he knew the age of the boat). I'll have to put money in her to make things right. Look. I'll give you 600,000, even though my mother will have to go to work."

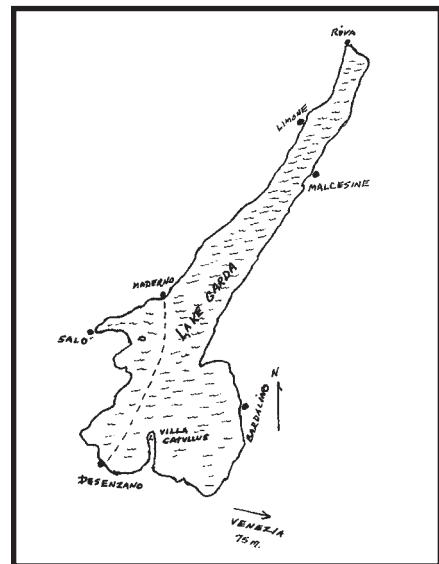
Sure. It went on like that for awhile, with lots of shouting and hand shaking. Finally he took a roll of lira out of his small briefcase and counted out 850,000, the price I had finally held at. I hadn't realized that there would be a second round of negotiations. After that, I decided to let him find out about the shrunken sail for himself.

We dined on grilled trout from the cold depths of the lake and a bottle of crisp Portofino. The trout, as always, was superb, as was the wine. The Cinzano umbrella flapped lightly as the evening breeze rolled down from the granite peaks on both sides of the lake. It was just pleasantly cool, as the lake moderated the cold air from above, keeping the temperature fairly steady. In spite of this northern latitude vineyards, lemon trees, and olive groves were scattered over the lower slopes of the mountains above the harbor. They were mostly hidden behind tall cypress trees and crumbling villa walls dating back to the middle ages, with occasional fragments from Roman times.

It was the deep waters of the lake that created this climate alchemy. The towns along this coast are known for having some of the oldest living people in the world. It was after 10pm when we returned to the dock. We left the buyer sifting through the gear in the Star as he started his first moments of ownership. I hoped he would enjoy his shrunken

sail, because after his chicanery, I certainly would. We raised the main and, waving goodbye, pushed our small sloop off from the docks and headed out of the harbor towards the middle of the lake. The moderate breeze was blowing down the lake so it was a fair run and the little sloop moved out smartly. The sky was sharp and clear and evening stars began to flicker over the peaks. As we ran down the lake, we kept a weather eye out for the tiny Island of Garda where a large castle-like villa, surrounded by thick pines and cypresses, sat on the southeast edge. The villa was one of many that, over the centuries, had been built over the ruins of the hermitage of St. Francis of Assisi.

Like the rest of Italy the history of this lake and its surroundings seems interminable. The Romans finally conquered the Stone Age tribes that had lived around the shores for at least 2,000 years. Once they had veni'd, vedi'd, vici'd, they built fortresses and opulent villas. One of the most famous is located at the tip of the peninsula of Sirmione, jutting out from the southern shores of the lake. Called the Grotto di Catullus, it was the summer residence of that famous poet by the same name, Catullus, a rascally old dog and a sailor. He dedicated



Map of Lake Garda.





Getting the old Star ready for the last voyage.



Daysailing an old Star on Lake Garda.

Getting her ready for the big race.



several poems to his old wooden sailboat. He also probably ran the first porn shop in the area. His erotic poetry remains published and greatly admired to this day.

Today the vine-covered ruins sit on a rocky knoll covered with scented bushes and wildflowers, all overlooking the lake. Visiting on a quiet day, before the tour busses arrive with their noisy throngs or chattering classes of nasty children come in from the local schools, one will be mesmerized and never want to leave. It stirs the blood and sometimes visions of the wild Roman parties that the old boy probably held here can be conjured up.

The territories of the lake have been warred over in turn by Romans, Barbarians, Veronese, Milanese, Venetians, Popes, Austrians, Emperors, the French, and many

others, such as the Nazis. Mussolini set up his failing government here, was captured and dragged to Milan where he went through an awful execution. Great naval battles were fought over the waters we now sailed on. In the 14th century the Venetians brought up a small armada of warships and booted out the current navy holding the southern end of the lake. The Venetians kept control of the lake for over four centuries. What I have yet to discover is how the Venetians trailered their warships overland for almost a hundred miles through untamed mountain passes and launched them at the northern end of the lake.

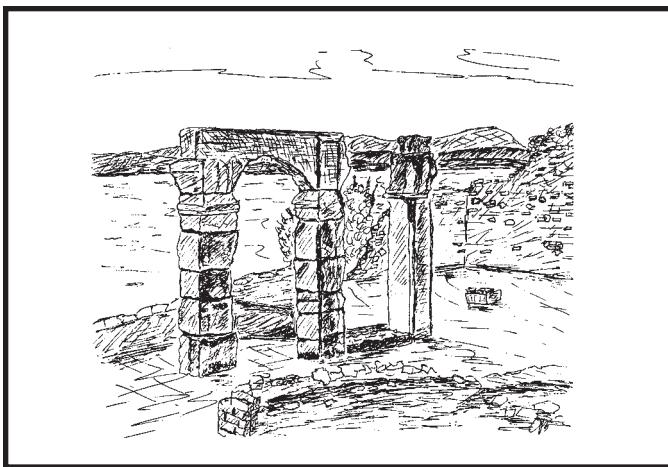
The moon was making an appearance. We glided past shifting shadows and bobbing ephemeral lights that surely must have been signs of all those souls who had sailed these waters over the centuries or... local fisher-



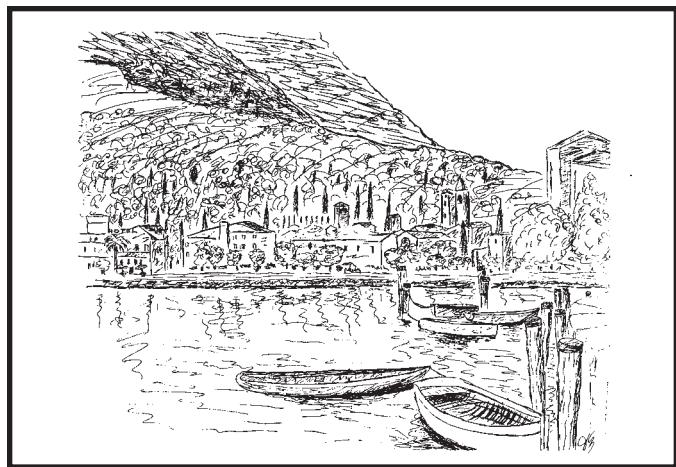
Ruins of the Villa Catullus.

men? We sailed past the tiny island of Garda, where St. Francis of Assisi had built his hermitage, later to become a Franciscan Monastery which eventually fell into ruin. The looming towers of the present villa sitting on the bones of those ruins were now visible in the moonlight where dark Aleppo pines held birds that called out in sad song to those unredeemed souls wandering the shores in the night. Nightingales?

It was well after 1:00 when we reached the harbor at Desenzano. We had to paddle the last hour or so. Rolf had a small outboard under the front deck but it seemed too quiet to disturb things with that racketey thing. All was still and the moored and docked boats looked ghostly at that hour. We secured the little sloop as quietly as possible (there were sleep aboards in the harbor) and found the Fiat station wagon waiting in the parking lot. As we left I tried hard not to look at the empty slip where the Star had been. Thinking of the new boat didn't help. Parting with a boat that you care about always hurts but times and needs change. Anyway, there had been many a good sail. It was a good time to remember.



Part of the fabulous ruins at the Grotto of Catullus.



The beautiful harbor of Maderno.

This is a story about the mighty North River in Scituate, Massachusetts. In August of 2003 there were two full moons, the first typically called a "blue moon," why I don't know. The moon would be high overhead at midnight on that Saturday evening. My friend Joyce thought it would be fun to get some kayak people together for an evening paddle on the river. I was invited.

Joyce called me at work that afternoon and asked if I was still on. My reply was, as I recall, "Well, I don't know, it's blowing about 20kts with higher winds predicted."

"Let's go and see at 5pm," Joyce said.

At 5:00 I arrived with kayak on roof rack to find Joyce in earnest confabulation with Doug, our friend, who is an expert paddler. The wind was southwest and not quite shrieking. We put our heads together and said, effectively, "We'd better not do this."

As we were talking 19 or 20 people showed up with kayaks. Somebody had posted this trip in the internet (it sure wasn't me!). One pair of paddlers immediately launched their boats and started paddling. Ironically, these two decided not to go forward after five minutes and pulled out their boats.

By this time, however, the proverbial lemmings had started their rush into the sea. All I could do was stand at the shoreline and say, "I wouldn't do this if I were you!" Nobody stopped, nobody asked me why.

Joyce called to me, "David, help me launch my boat." Which, of course, I did. I did not, however, launch my own Old Town Loon III. In my mind I could see several hours of major rescuing needed in the near future. I was not equipped to do this.

In fact, I briefly considered calling the harbor masters to see if they could head off the adventure at the pass. In the end I did not, and that was the right decision. So the moonstruck paddlers took off for the "Spit" (sand spit at the mouth of the North River) and I went and ate a pizza.

The 20-odd paddlers had an uneventful trip down the Herring River, which feeds into the North River, to the Spit. As the sun went down they had a picnic. Doug said later that people enjoyed themselves.

As night fell the moon got higher and the tide rose. When it was totally dark and the moon was at its peak, Joyce and Doug decided it was time to round up the party of revelers and lead them back to the launch

## A River and Some Accidents Which Didn't Happen

By Dave Howard

area. This was when the first trouble started. Doug tried to persuade people to use the buddy system to ensure that everyone stayed together and on track. People just shrugged it off in a manner that suggested, "Who the heck is this guy, anyway?" So much for the concept of a group leader.

By the time the paddlers left the beach the wind was blowing at a steady 25kts. Suddenly those of the group with limited paddling experience were having trouble. Most of the group were struggling somewhat at the least. Then the real challenge appeared, with the full moon high tide the banks of the river literally disappeared underwater. Only strands and clumps of spartina (marsh grass) stood out top outline where the land used to be.

With no acknowledged leadership, small groups wandered into the shallows of the marshes, risking stranding in the shallow water. Fortunately most of the group had flashlights (everyone had PFDs). Joyce and Doug stayed close to the confused paddlers and no one got far away from the group but tiredness and frustration began to set in. By this time it was well after midnight and everyone had been out for over six hours. At least one in the group began to cry.

Joyce decided to pull the plug. Her VHF battery proved to be low but she dialed 911 on her cell phone and the police notified the harbor masters.

The harbor masters were having their own adventures that evening. People on two power boats had needed rescuing earlier. One had merely sunk and the other one had caught on fire. Fortunately these necessary rescues were quickly dealt with.

The harbor masters arrived on the scene at about 2am. At first they became disoriented, as had the kayak group. But emergency vehicles that were gathering at the launch site provided a focal point on the river. The harbor masters took the paddlers in tow and got everyone off the water and safe by 3am. No one was hurt, two boats had to be temporarily abandoned but were recovered later that morning.

Ultimately everyone was safe, with much credit due to Doug and Joyce who used towlines to assist some paddlers, and great credit goes to the public safety officials who spent a late night rescuing the wayward group.

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Elizabeth Harbour in the Exumas is a nearly ideal haven for the cruising sailboat. When I was there in 1978 in the midst of a year-long cruise with my family there were a fair number of boats congregated with informal social connections. However, it seems now the numbers are huge with all kinds of highly structured and organized activities. Located at the southern end of the chain of the Exuma Cays, its principal settlement is George Town which lies on the southwest side of the harbor. We remained at anchor off Regatta Point during the Christmas festivities which culminated in the explosion of sound and color of the Juncanoo Parade.

However, the gem of the harbor is Stocking Island, across from George Town, which boasts four perfectly protected anchorages, superb beaches on both the harbor and ocean sides, and an abundance of coral reefs for snorkeling. After Christmas a series of northerns came roaring down to churn up the waters of the harbor. The wind howled and raged virtually without cease until the middle of January.

Our goal was to go further south to the Virgins and the Lesser Antilles. While we waited for charts and for more favorable and less boisterous breezes, we sought out sailors who had gone to the Virgins or were planning to go. No one seemed anxious to set sail. Some had tried the trip and turned back, weary of battling strong trade winds right on the nose. The author of one cruising guide that we consulted described the route south of the Bahamas in these ominous terms:

"South of the 22nd parallel, where the prevailing trades blow a steady 20-25kts in winter and 15kts in summer, a strong and competent crew is essential. The longer, more northerly routes which lie north of Long Island and Acklins and face straight into the trades, are recommended for larger vessels bound for Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands."

Perhaps mother, father, and two boys aged eight and four would not be considered a strong crew, but I knew we were competent and I had confidence that our 35' C&C Frigate could handle almost any conditions. Even so, I did not relish beating into heavy seas for 400 miles. However, the charts arrived, the wind eased to 15kts from the north-northeast, and on the 18th of January we sailed away from the safe lee of Stocking out the east channel and beat across toward Long Island. By 1730 we cleared the hungry looking reefs off Cape Santa Maria and eased the sheets on a course to carry us southerly of Rum Cay.

The evening settled in upon the vessel, cooler night air brought a change into long pants and long sleeved shirts as astern the orange disk of the sun immersed itself in the sea. A few lights blinked on the shore of Long Island, and the self-steerer held us on a steady southerly course.

Through the night the gentle norther continued and our little vessel beam reached under clear starry skies at a steady 4½kts. At 0900 Crooked Island appeared off the starboard bow and I turned on the power to charge the batteries. By noon we had cleared the Northeast Point off Acklins and bore off slightly toward the Plana Cays. The beach on the westernmost of the Plana Cays is almost flawless in its perfection. Wide with the fine pinkish sand typical of these coral based islands, it stretches along the entire western

## In Search of the Tradewinds

By Peter Anderson

side of the cay.

There was a total absence of human intrusion, only the tracks of sandpipers and crabs showed on the smooth sand. The island belonged to the sea and its creatures. A persistent surge and no protection for vessels assured its remote and unspoiled character. We disturbed the solitude only briefly to let our small crew members stretch their legs while supper was being prepared. The cook prepared a special treat, a chocolate cake for dessert. Then we hoisted the dinghy back on deck, put on sail, and heeled down as the still northeasterly winds pushed us toward West Caicos Island, 80 miles to the southeast.

At 2330 the wind shifted toward the southeast. The vessel continued to move well with hardened sheets and I held her on the port tack, not realizing that we were being pushed well south of the rhumb line course. In today's age of handheld GPS and other sophisticated electronic gear available to small vessels one tends to forget that in 1978 the navigational equipment was much more low tech. We had a compass, a radio direction finder (useless in those waters), a fathometer, a sextant, and a Walker taffrail log. Since we were primarily island hopping I did not use the sextant, sticking to dead reckoning.

As dawn came the boys began stirring below, then poked their heads up through the companionway when the sun had fully risen. After breakfast land appeared off the port bow. If the Walker log were accurate, and it usually spun off the miles with uncanny precision, that land was Little Inagua. I hoped vainly that it might be West Caicos but a fishing vessel lying off the reefs confirmed that we were still 25 miles from West Caicos.

With the wind picking up strength from the east southeast and the seas building, we faced a rugged upwind battle to reach an anchorage at Providenciales before dark. Since the batteries needed charging again we motor sailed. How rapidly the seas can build when the wind churns them across unimpeded stretches of water. The trades had resumed their normal strength and direction. I wondered whether this was the start of that grind to the Antilles some cruisers refer to as the "thorny path."

It seemed like an interminable thrash but around 1500 we sighted the hazy outline of West Caicos as we rose up on the crest of a sea. We entered the sheltered waters of the Caicos Bank through the "Clear Sand Road." In the dark we anchored off the South Bluff of Providenciales Island. The cook prepared a special treat for our arrival in the Caicos, tacos, but we were unable to fully savor them and passed out utterly exhausted right after supper.

We awoke to survey a barren and uninhabited shoreline, a sorry contrast with the pretty Bahamas we had left behind. The Q flag was dutifully raised, but not wanting to enter on a Sunday because of overtime charges, we decided to remain isolated until the next morning. On Monday morning we moved to an exposed bay with a settlement along the shore. Though not identified on the chart, it turned out to be the settlement and harbor of Five Cays. I rowed in toward the

beach, there being no pier of any sort, and was greeted by two men sculling toward me in a native dinghy.

"Where can I find the customs?" I asked.

"Don't worry about a thing, we will take you to him," called out the man in the bow. They turned and headed back into the beach where they anchored their boat and then came ashore to carry mine up above the high water mark. I was a little apprehensive as to where this profusion of helpfulness would lead, but they kept assuring me that they were fellow mariners and that Turks Islanders (a local term for any native of the Turks and Caicos Islands) pride themselves in helping out strangers.

The more outspoken and boisterous of the two introduced himself. His full name was Absalom Hemineas MacIntosh (Boll Weevil to his friends), he was feeling no ill effects from an early morning dose of bootleg Haitian rum. Parker was the quieter and apparently more stable individual.

We started off down the narrow paved road which led inland from Five Cays to the Customs House and airport. The sky was clear and the fiery heat of the sun, even in the morning, was much more intense, more tropical than it had been in the Bahamas. However, soon a car approached and Boll Weevil hailed the driver, the car stopped, and we all piled in. About a mile down the road we pulled into a gas station near a small shopping center. I asked if there was a place to cash a traveler's check and was promptly escorted to the local bank by Boll Weevil.

The bank consisted of one room about the size of an average American sitting room. Boll Weevil, in his eagerness to assist his fellow mariner, attempted to get the clerks to attend to me immediately. This seemed to upset the other customers so I told him to relax, I didn't mind waiting. The room was air conditioned.

The other passenger in the car, a distinguished grey haired gentleman, placed a sack of coins in front of one of the two clerks. He turned out to be the pastor of the church at Five Cays, presumably banking the collection from the Sunday services.

The custom house was only a short distance from the shopping center. The customs agent required two forms which he assisted me to fill out. The whole procedure took less than ten minutes. The transire stated that the vessel *Pandion* had cleared the port of Providenciales and that its destination was South Caicos. Nearby at the airport the immigration process was equally painless.

After being conveyed back to Five Cays, I inquired as to what I could reimburse them for gasoline and was given the typical response in the Turks and Caicos, "Whatever you think is correct." I gave him five dollars which he accepted readily and then indicated that the church building fund needed a contribution. Although feeling somewhat coerced, I came up with two more dollars for the Five Cays Church building fund, said donation being duly recorded by the pastor with a broad smile.

For the fellow mariners, who stated that their assistance required no compensation, I decided to supply liquid refreshments. This involved far more complex negotiations than clearing customs and immigration. The local barkeep had to be summoned to open up her establishment. When that was finally accomplished we enjoyed a few bottles of warm

Becks beer and an interesting talk with the good-natured Mrs. Morely who urged me to bring Matthew and Nathan ashore to play with her grandchildren.

After leaving the bar Parker drifted off to other pursuits but Boll Weevil, helping himself to the use of Parker's boat, followed me back to *Pandion*. He then insisted on taking me and the boys on an expedition in search of conch, fish, or any other fruits of the sea we might locate.

He borrowed one of our face masks and commenced ferrying us across the harbor by a very unusual method. First he disappeared over the side as if diving for conch or fish. Then we felt the dinghy moving forward. Boll Weevil was under the boat pushing it forward while walking along the bottom in the shallow water. Periodically he would surface for air, then dive and continue propelling the boat forward.

As we moved into deeper water Boll Weevil abandoned his underwater propulsion in favor of sculling. We explored the major part of Five Cays harbor before locating a large bed of conch on the north side of the bay. Boll Weevil and Matthew went eagerly to work collecting them. Soon the bottom of the boat was loaded with conch and we returned to *Pandion* to display our catch to the cook.

Boll Weevil then treated us to a demonstration of a real expert removing conch from the shell and cleaning it. For the past three months I had struggled to remove conch from their shells. I would beat on their shells with a hammer and chisel, knocking holes in several spots, and then set out blindly to sever the crustaceans from their grip on their protective coverings. This could go on for quite a period of time before I had produced our meal.

On the other hand, in 30 seconds Boll Weevil knocked a small hole by banging two conch shells together, made a quick cut in just the right spot, and popped the meat out. In ten seconds more, with his several deft slices of a sharp knife, the meat was cleaned. He cut up a few thin slices and requested some hot sauce. He then astounded us by literally covering the slice of conch with Tabasco, tossing it into his mouth, and chewing happily with no ill affects.

Though he had apparently not scorched the interior of his mouth, I was sure that Boll Weevil would welcome the offer of a drink of rum. It was a "happy hour" like none other on our trip. Boll Weevil held forth on the fantail regaling us with stories of voyages to Haiti in native sloops, of storms, of the magical Haitian trick of making things disappear ("even Jesus Christ himself can't stop a Haitian from tiefin"), and of his rhetorical talent for stirring up religious fervor though he himself had no religious belief. As the slight evening chill descended on Five Cays he briefed me on the course across the banks to South Caicos, then hopped in the dinghy and sculled ashore.

As a weatherman Boll Weevil proved no better than his stateside counterparts. The northerly wind he had predicted turned out to be a light southeaster right on our nose as we headed out for South Caicos the next morning. Cockburn Harbour lay over 50 miles away and it was doubtful that we could make that distance with our remaining fuel supply or before dark. While every passage is unique, some recall previous sails in other waters. Our crossing of the Caicos Bank was

very similar to our crossing of the Little Bahama Bank three months before. In both we faced 50 miles of open water with the wind on our nose. There was the same sensation of being far at sea while land lay deceptively close, miles of shallow water so clear that the bottom seemed just beneath the keel and the late afternoon scanning of the horizon for a low lying cay.

At 1400 with the log reading 32 we ran out of fuel. In an hour-and-a-half of sailing in light air we raised Six Hills Cays. We dropped anchor in the lee of the cays seven miles short of Cockburn Harbour. We reached the harbor the next morning and filled our tanks with gas and water. The water came from the town cistern. Water distribution was done by donkey cart and I observed two of them were filling their tanks while I waited to fill my jugs with water. We picked up some mail at the post office and cleared with the customs officer who then gave us a ride to the grocery store in his pickup truck.

Sometimes there is a feeling of rightness about departure on a passage. It has to do with preparations, hoisting the dinghy onboard, lashing down moveable gear, laying courses, checking the radio, stowing the anchor, baking bread, and planning menus. But it involves more than preparations which should always be carefully attended to. It is a general good feeling. The wind and weather are right and the crew approach it with pleasant anticipation. Our departure for San Juan was one of that nature. An added bonus this time was that we sailed in the company of another boat, a Pearson 39 named *Tangerine* with which we made occasional radio contact.

Our plan was to push straight easterly until well clear of the Silver Bank and then gradually turn southeasterly toward Puerto Rico as the wind allowed it. We left with a southwest wind, unusual for the trade wind region, but we were hopeful of carrying it well to the eastward before a shift to the east or southeast. Our route would cover around 400 miles and for most of the time we would be better than 100 miles from the nearest land, certainly not an ocean passage of epic dimensions but a rigorous test for a small family crew. I estimated that we would be at sea from four to five days, a challenge to our ability to live together in peace and harmony.

A relentless tropical sun bore down as we reached out into open sea under the light southwest breeze. The ocean swells were long and gentle and the vessel made a steady four knots under genoa and main. Grand Turk appeared off to starboard and we bore off a few degrees casting a wary eye at the foaming crests of seas breaking on the reef that juts out from its northern shore. By 1645 we had cleared the reef and trimmed the sheets for a better sailing angle.

With the coming of darkness the wind shifted to the north northeast. The usual pattern of the trade winds seemed to be proving out, westerly winds do not last long. I wondered whether the wind would continue swinging easterly, whether this presaged a long grind to windward, the hard route which has given the passage the "thorny path" nickname.

But the wind did not provide our first crisis. An odor of gasoline, which had been faintly noticeable all day, became extremely pungent below. Just before sitting down to our spaghetti dinner I decided to check the engine area. A piece of rubber hose linking the gasoline filler hose to the tank had deteri-

orated and fuel was sloshing out of the tank as we rolled in the seas. After anxious moments trying to plug the tank, I was able to salvage enough of the torn hose to reconnect it with hose clamps. After I had pumped the bilge and aired the engine room the fumes dissipated.

My apprehensions about the northeast wind shifting easterly proved unfounded, it neither shifted nor increased in strength. Instead, just before midnight it quit altogether. We motored along over the glassy swells until 0600 when a southwesterly zephyr arose and held tenuously throughout the day pushing *Pandion* along at an irritatingly listless pace. Twenty-four hours after departure from South Caicos we had logged just 90 miles.

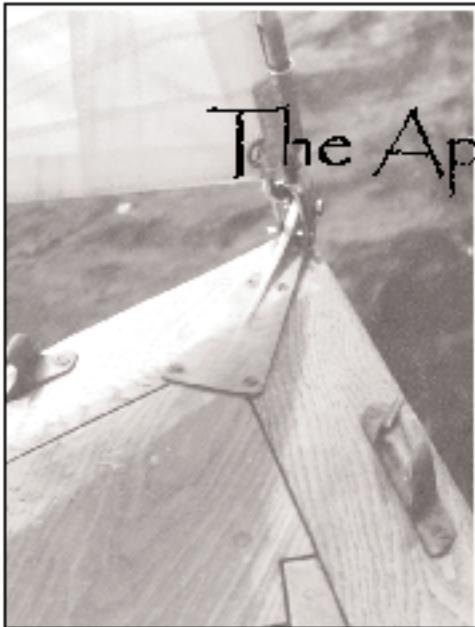
At 1545 the breeze ceased and I put the power back on. We motored slowly throughout the late afternoon and into the night. Even the faintest wind was preferable to powering, besides the noise, smell, and consumption of our limited fuel supply, powering meant continuous helm duty since our self-steering vane required wind to operate. However, the unpleasantness came to a forced end just after I came on watch at 0200 when the tank ran out of fuel. That meant that we had ten gallons left in jerry jugs on deck which I felt should be conserved for possible emergency use and for entering San Juan Harbor.

An hour later a light southerly stirred and began to ease us over the swells. The third day was a carbon copy of the previous two. At 1130 I calculated our position to be 21 degrees north latitude, 68 degrees 40 minutes west longitude. If that were correct we were 120 miles from the nearest land, the northeastern tip of Hispaniola. I felt sure that at that point we had safely cleared the dangerous Silver Bank, a large area of coral reefs rising abruptly out of the surrounding depths and the only real navigational hazard on our route. We altered course to head directly toward San Juan.

Again we spent an airless night, this time completely motionless, the log hung vertical in the smooth black sea, pointer stationary at 200 miles. By my dead reckoning the trip was half over but I wondered what the current was doing to us with the vessel making so little forward progress.

Finally at 0330 on January 28 a breeze of substance finally started to blow and still our luck held. It was southwest and increasing. By noon the lee rail was awash so I reefed the main. As the wind increased so did my spirits. Matthew was ecstatic when his persistent trolling finally yielded a prize, a long brilliantly colored fish. After consulting the fish book and much excited discussion, we decided it was a wahoo. Edibility excellent, said the guide. My task, cleaning it on the heeling aft deck with *Pandion* hurtling through building seas, was not easy but the flavor was truly excellent.

After dining on the fish we settled into our night routine. The boys turned in forward soon after dark. Their mother took the first watch while I slept on the port berth of the main cabin, lulled by the rush of water against the hull close to my head. A sharp crack roused me out of drowsiness as I emerged from the companionway at midnight for my watch. I watched helplessly as the genny slid into the water to leeward. Apparently the halyard had let go at some point. I hooked on my harness and went forward to laboriously haul it back on board. After an hour of fumbling with tangled lines



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in the dark, I got the working jib up. Examination of the rigging which had tumbled down with the sail revealed that a shackle had broken, casting loose the roller furling gear from the mast.

At 9:00 the next morning we registered our first 24 hour run of better than 100 miles since the departure from Cockburn Harbour and our spirits received another boost from a peculiar source. Coming in loud and clear from San Juan was an American style radio station with pop music, commercials, and news from the CBS radio network. I observed that a passing steamer, apparently headed for San Juan, was steering a more southerly course than we were. A course check seemed called for so I used the transistor radio to get a null on the radio station. It confirmed what the steamer's course suggested and accordingly we altered course to south.

Anticipation of arrival grew, but with a slackening breeze our speed diminished and we all wondered whether we would spend another night at sea. The sight of the resort hotels of San Juan gleaming in the afternoon sunlight offered hope that we would not. That day brought a feeling of contentment as I lounged on the foredeck, *Pandion* sliding easily over ocean swells as the hazy outline of the peaks of Puerto Rico gradually drew nearer, the tropical sun dropping into the sea between two freighters passing to the west, satisfaction over a passage almost completed.

The battlements of Morro Castle loomed above us in the dark, an eerie sentinel at the harbor entrance as we came into the harbor. Confronting a bewildering array of lighted buoys in the bay without a harbor chart, we did not locate the yacht anchorage that night. We dropped the hook outside but it was easy enough to find in the morning light.

The passage was over, 1 days after leaving the friendly confines of Elizabeth Harbour we found ourselves in a totally different world and it felt good. We rented a car and drove into the countryside surrounding San Juan, up into the tropical rain forest of El Yunque, a 3,000' foot peak, a sharp contrast to the flat arid islands of the Bahamas. We strolled the narrow streets of old San Juan, in spirit, if not geography, more European than American.

In time we moved on along the northern coast of the island viewing El Yunque from the sea this time. The trades resumed their normal direction as we motor sailed first in moderate easterlies and then beat our way in fresh breezes the lasts 20 miles from Culebra to Saint Thomas.

The navigation and management of the ship had been smooth, blessed as we were by gentle southwesterly winds, a rarity for those waters at that time of the year. Perhaps our passage to the Virgins was atypical, perhaps for some it is a brutal struggle punishing to both boat and crew. But then what is a typical passage? Ours demonstrated that with the patience to wait for the right conditions, thorough preparation, and a little dose of luck the small well-found yacht with a family crew can make the voyage.

It is a voyage that opens up a richly rewarding cruising area. From the Virgins down through the Leeward and Windward Islands, it has matchless tradewind sailing and weather, the history and spectacle of English Harbour, Antigua, the towering green peaks of Dominica, the French imprint of Guadalupe and Martinique and the joyous life style of the Caribbean people.



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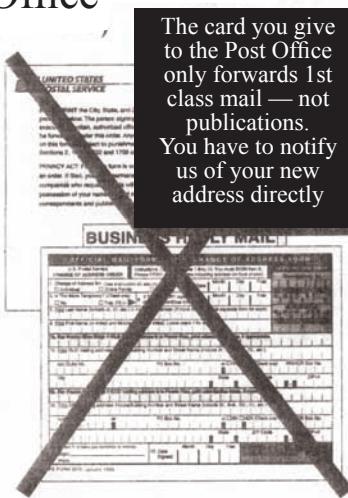
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The Back River is a short estuary that drains into the northeast corner of Buzzards Bay on Cape Cod. It flows in when the tide's rising and ebbs out when it's falling. The river widens to a bay that is about a half mile across but extremely shallow. Most boat traffic is limited by the lack of depth (under 2' at low water) and the Shore Road and railroad bridges (about 5' above high water). But its sheltered waters were ideal for the Snark.

My son Zachary (age five) and I sailed "upstream" as far as the bridges where we pulled in to the right bank among some old cedars that had toppled. There Zach held onto a branch while I pulled the mast, furled the sail, and picked up the paddles. Then we paddled under both bridges, replaced the mast, and sailed on up the river to our hearts' content. We had to pick the tide right for the narrowest stretch between the bridges flowed too fast to fight with the paddle.

Today the tide was in the last stage of its ebb so paddling was pretty easy. Not far from where we stopped to take out the mast a couple of Hispanic men were casting for fish. This was known as a good fishing spot, when a school of bluefish or stripers came in chasing baitfish on a rising tide one could get three hits in three minutes. Alan, my brother-in-law, had pulled in a 5lb schoolie here the summer before. We had just started fishing when the strike came. I had made no more than five casts and they were jumping all across the river when the fun came to a sudden stop, my five-year-old nephew Chris got his leg hooked in several places by a fishing lure. We had to get him home quickly where there was better light and band aids.

#### **Waving to Shorebound Diners**

No such misadventures today though. Between the railroad bridge and the Shore Road bridge was The Lobster Trap restaurant. Diners watched the river through large screened porch windows. Busy with both hands on the paddle, I asked Zachary to look at the people and wave. This trick never fails. I was glad to give Zach the chance to set off the waving this time. It shows how attentive the shorebound are to events on the water and bonds us all in a sociable maritime community. Perhaps it goes back to the days when ships would bring long-awaited cargo or sailors home.

When we got under the Shore Road bridge we shouted and listened for our echoes. Once through the bridge the river forked and flowed east to Eel Pond or north up the river. There were some large boulders here at all depths so I had to be alert with the paddle. Once we were safely away through the bridge and boulders, I put down the paddle and raised the sail. I was happy to lean back and let the sail do the physical work, but now I had to get back to pretending. "Bert, there are no pirates here," I said in Jim Henson's Ernie voice (from Sesame Street).

"Oh yes, there are, Ernie. If there are no pirates here, whose boats are those over there all ready to go out and raid for treasure?" Bert's voice asked.

"I think you're right, Bert. What are we going to do if they come after us?" Zachary asked Bert.

"I don't know. Maybe abandon ship?" Bert said.

In my own voice, I said, "Well I don't think they've seen us. Anyway, even if they did, we could just turn on the invisible switch and disappear," I said, pointing to the cleat at

#### **Snark Bytes:**

## **Back to the Back River**

By Rob Gogan

the top of the dagger board on which we fastened the main sheet.

"Oh yeah, I forgot about that," Bert said. Zachary also seemed relieved. Months later Zachary had trouble falling asleep and he said he was scared that back on this day we had been out on the water, vulnerable to pirates and drowning. Ironic that at the moment he had no conscious fear at all.

#### **Among the Salt Marsh Channels**

We sailed on a reach upstream, gentle ebb current making our hull's splashing progress sound much faster than our land speed actually was, but satisfactory just the same. There was a lot of wildlife and not much evidence of people this far up the river. We saw snowy egrets, great blue herons, a green heron, and all the usual gulls, terns, and cormorants. We saw an osprey scoop a 1lb striped bass out of the river. When we had gone upriver far enough we came to a series of grassy avenues cut in a grid. According to John Stilgoe's book, *Alongshore*, grids like these were cut in the 19th century to facilitate harvesting and transport of salt marsh hay. It is fascinating to Google Earth New England's salt marshes where the ancient channels are plainly visible in the shallows.

With the sail down now we paddled gently through a few lanes until the spartina grass got so thick we couldn't get through. This neighborhood had made a big impression on my elder son Josh but all Zach wanted to do was get "back to the game, Daddy." I think he was a little impressed when I spotted a turtle the size of a dinner plate flashing its yellow feet a couple of feet in front of the bow, retreating lazily towards the depths ahead of us.

We had come as far as we could go up this channel. Now it was time to go home. By now the tide was pretty slack but it was going to turn soon and we'd have a tough time paddling through the bridges if we let it build up much momentum. We would be fighting a headwind, too. That would mean we'd have to tack our way out. But the steady Buzzards Bay southwester seldom leaves its sailors without sufficient wind to tack against the tide.

#### **Perched on a Rock**

We made good progress beating ahead, nearly reaching the bridges, when I took us in a little too close to shore and we stopped dead in the water with a crunch. The boulders near the mouth, I suddenly remembered. The dagger board, which we had fully extended during our upwind leg, had hit hard on a rock, shifted back slightly, and jammed itself firmly in its housing, ramping the whole boat a couple of inches out of the water. Zach couldn't hit the dagger board up. Even I had to rock and wiggle the whole boat a few times before the dagger board slipped. Then a shove with the paddle got us free again. Other than a little fraying of the bottom of the dagger board, there was no harm done.

We sailed the rest of the way to the Shore Road bridge, then paddled through. A

knotted rope dangled from the railroad bridge, which some local boys used for climbing down into or up out of the water. It provided a welcome gauge to show which way the tide was running and how fast. Swimmers usually came here only at high tide, still I was always nervous about jumpers when passing under this bridge.

One day when we came here in kayaks there was a swimmer holding onto the rope as we rode the ebb out. He asked us to wait up and let go of the rope, making a few quick crawl strokes towards us. His friends on the bridge overhead, all local boys, stifled giggles. I was worried that the swimmer meant us mischief, maybe to flip and dunk us. I smiled and greeted him and his friends but maintained a strong stroke pace. The swimmer quickly fell behind and we watched him try to fight the ebb current back to the bridge. He ended up 100 yards away from the bridge among the abandoned fishing tackle and sharp railroad bed ballast. Now his friends were laughing at him.

#### **The Southwester Beats the Tide**

Well past the bridge and swimmers we raised the sail again. Here in the river the full strength of the southwester was tempered by the trees and the riverbank so our progress was slow until we rounded the last bend and saw Wing's Neck with a mile of bay between us providing a clear fetch for the breeze. Now our speed picked up and we started plunging through the whitecaps. We had a 300 yard beat to windward to get around Rocky Point with its house-sized boulders.

Fortunately I knew exactly where each one was so we could shave the Point well inside the nun buoy marking safe passage. This was important because the less we had to fight the whitecaps near the rocks, the better I liked it. I think the little Snark was impossible to capsize in these conditions, and though we had swamped a couple of times when overloaded, we had never come close to capsizing. Still visions of trying to bail out a swamped hull as we drifted into the rocks in choppy seas were not pleasant.

Today we made it back without incident and Zach once again didn't need prompting to pull out the dagger board and help me drag the boat up above the seaweed bank marking high water. He went on to the house with his PFD and our empty drink containers while I furled the sail and tied the flags back onto the mast. It is always hard for me to quit sailing and come ashore, but my regrets were tempered by the fact that tomorrow we would go back to the Back.



It was at a rather low point of a particularly dark period in my life that I set in motion an extended boat trip to one of the most spectacular corners of this planet. If you must know, I was participating in a new social experiment game then sweeping the nation called Splithesheets. Well, anyway, I was calling an almost-new 26'6" inboard auxiliary sloop home in those days. And when I heard about the wonders of Desolation Sound, it sounded like just the place to go. It was a good trip. An outstanding trip. Most of it.

I have a very close friend whom I had recently met during that long ago time in the run up to my voyage to Desolation. (I'll leave the ironies of the potential metaphors up to your own very well-developed imaginations). We'll call my friend "Larry" because that's what he calls himself, only without the quotes. I don't get to see Larry but every few years anymore. But, there's something about a particularly good friendship, especially with a past shipmate, that makes it perfectly okay to drop in and out of your life. Larry and I can pick up a conversation of months before just like it was during lunch today. This past year I went through the death of his father in almost nightly long distance phone calls. He has been a major support to me while transiting the rocks and shoals of life as well. Yeah, we're shipmates.

The other night, while we were solving the world's problems by phone, Larry mentioned that he still had fond memories of our Desolation Sound trip, even counting the Harmony Island incident. Larry and my then five-year-old daughter accompanied me on part of that voyage north from Seattle to the wilds of tidewater British Columbia. Someplace in my stuff I probably still have the logbook from *Elisa K*. The boat was named for my oldest daughter who is now the mother of my current occasional shipmate and granddaughter. The log would tell me which port we picked Larry up in, but I think it was someplace in the Canadian San Juans that he could reach by ferry.

My normal culinary style can be, and almost always has been, described by the minimal number of pots and cans required to complete a meal, especially at sea. I have brought Mr. Moore to my ship's table longer than I can remember. Heck, he's even been there for breakfast on those mornings following an evening sail that somehow was still in progress come sunup. You know those spontaneous after-work outings where the only fresh food in the larder is that pastel green and orange plant normally found in dark, moist comers. I'm sorry, but I never really learned to make "real" meals. You know, the ones that don't come already mixed up in a can, jar, or box.

But, Larry. Now, he's a true renaissance man. He can remember verse that most of us never even had to read in high school. He can describe the inner workings of origami. He can quote interviews broadcast on NPR. And, Larry can COOK. He certainly makes my two-can-one-pot, save your spoon from lunch kind of at sea meals into the sort of thing even the ship's dog would turn his nose up at. Yessirree, Larry can cook, and quote, and entertain with the best of 'em. What I'm leading up to is if Larry has a thin spot in his resume, it might be a teensy weensy failure to immediately grasp the mechanical arts. We all know people like this. Don't get me wrong. I love Larry like a brother. But maybe

## All's Well That Ends Well

By Dan Rogers

there are a few tasks that I should more thoroughly brief before delegating, if you know what I'm getting at.

It was after a rather long and varied day of sailing, motoring, sun, mist, and rain, and sun again, the sort of summer conditions coastal BC is legendary for. We arrived inside a small archipelago forming a channel with the wall of a fjord opposite. From my earlier perusal of the chart this looked like a good place to anchor for the night. While it had been obvious from the outset, we couldn't make it much before nightfall, the place looked like the best choice for miles around. For those of us used to anchoring in two fathoms over compact, level, sand bottoms, British Columbia can come as quite a shock. The normal setup is to sort of hook the anchor into a submarine cliff side with a continuous line from boat to tree to boat again. This is known locally as the "shoreline rig."

Both elements of this anchoring setup are interdependent, both essential. The anchor has to stay set to avoid an unpleasant collision with the shoreline. The shoreline has to maintain tension to avoid the anchor from falling out of the cliff and dangling ineffectually hundreds of feet above the sea floor. The expression, "aground and sinking in 500' of water," was coined in this kind of place.

So we entered this rather narrow, rock strewn passage, quite ignorant of the local customs. Seems that if you wanted a secure anchorage you had to be in and set by about lunch time. Another local custom appears to be the placement of deck chairs on the pointy ends of the early-arriving motor yachts to better witness the travails of latecomers such as we!

As it turned out all the good spots with reasonably permeable bottoms had been taken. It was getting dark. The tidal flow through that narrow passage was way stronger than I ever expected. And prudent mariners don't sail around for pleasure in these waters after dark. It's entertaining enough to avoid random rock piles and locomotive sized logs during hours of sunshine. Furthermore, *Elisa K* had a rather minimal navigation suite. She carried a flashing depth sounder (good to about 10 fathoms max), a bulkhead mounted compass, and a stack of "navy surplus" charts. We were in no good position to go probing for another anchorage in the dark.

In those days LORAN Charlie was still the size of a foot locker, GPS still the unborn brainchild of the pocket protector and bow tie set, and I had only met a few people with radar on vessels smaller than something with "USS" in its name. I certainly didn't have radar anyway.

I dropped the Danforth and the damn thing just sort of bounced off the smooth rock channel bottom. We were twisting downstream, paying out rode and praying for a crack of crevice to grab the flukes as they skittered by. I didn't notice quite yet but the bleachers were filling up, much like the Roman Coliseum must have looked to a pack of hungry lions and their hapless prey. Without a whole lot of discussion I called Larry up from his ministrations in the galley.

Ah, the meals that might have been...

I tied the bitter end of my bucket full of shoreline to my belt and vaulted into the little squarish sort of a catamaran dink that I was towing as a shore boat. During these spontaneous acrobatics I shouted to Larry in the now rapidly receding cockpit of my ship and home to hold her head to the current while I found something to secure the shoreline around and get back aboard. As I focused on rowing that rather unrowable little boat toward a mound of rocks, UP CURRENT, I lost momentary track of the goings on aboard *Elisa K*.

Sometimes it's better to quit even before you think you just might be ahead. This was one of those times. But like I said, I was focused on getting to that mound of rocks. I got to that dubious refuge and about the time I realized that there was not much to hook my shoreline around, the line tied around my waist pulled up taught. Yep. The whole shebang had run out of the bucket. The sailboat was drifting away down current and toward the line of watching "Romans."

As I tried to snub up and hold three tons of fiberglass, steel, teak, aluminum, lead, etc. holding my daughter, my friend, and my cat, about my only purchase was to dig heels and bare legs into the barnacles and equally sharp mollusks homesteading my borrowed rock pile. Somehow the engine had stalled. In the excitement Larry had gotten the throttle full ahead and the engine in gear. Good news, it would start in gear. Bad news, it would roar and flame out immediately. I was hoarsely shouting instructions from my perch, now 500 feet' away, as measured by the shoreline bent to my waist.

Never one to give up the ship, I pulled for all I was worth. But the inexorable logic kept crashing through my natural optimism in situations like this. Even IF I was able to stop the boat's drift. Even IF I was able to somehow pull her up current from my slippery, now bloody, vantage point the physics were immutable. The boat had no other choice but to swing toward the rocky side of this ice age culvert we were minutes before attempting to anchor in. Things were going from bleak to awful. I really had no other choice but to hang on, and hope Larry and Mr. Atomic-4 would reach an amicable working arrangement. Someplace in all of this melee was 100' of anchor and rode still attached to the bow and searching for a place to glom on to.

About the time Flavius Maximus would have been calling for a coup de grace from his favorite gladiator, a presumably good-intentioned member of the burgeoning audience set out toward *Elisa K* in a Boston Whaler. Just when I began to think things are going to turn out alright, this guy brandishes a peavee. You know, one of those poles with an iron point and swiveling hook used to move logs around in the holding ponds of the world's saw mills. And the point is aimed at my boat's still gleaming gel coat. I'm not making this up.

At this point I was about all in. Larry was still revving and stalling the engine and things didn't point to a happy ending. Nope. I've been told by people who say they know about these things that God won't give you more than you can handle (unless, of course, if it kills you, that is). And I guess the Master Mariner decided I had about all I could take at that specific juncture. Maybe the anchor grabbed something. Maybe Larry got the

motor running. Maybe the guy with the Whaler helped a bit by towing rather than impaling my hapless crew and boat. Dunno what finally worked. But, I was finally able to limp on my rubber-bands-for-knees down to the little squarish dink and row with my rubber-bands-for-arms downstream to the now waiting *Elisa K.*

It was a sleepless night. I sat out in the cockpit with a flashlight on the adjoining cliff. We had a tenuous hold on the channel bottom and a shoreline stretched fully across the entrance, marginally denoted by life jacket lights spaced every 50' or so. It rained much of that night. There was the crash of an unseen avalanche and rockslide in the fjord wall someplace above us. While we had a sort of place of refuge, once the tide turned our anchors were likely to dislodge and start the freak show all over again. Believe me, we had all ground tackle housed, steam up, and a bone in our teeth at the first gray, wet, hint of dawn.

Throughout this episode of shouting and wild careering about *Elisa* showed a remarkable sense of equanimity and, well, poise. Through most of the roaring and spinning she was below doing what little girls and dolls are wont to do. However, as Larry told me later, at the height of the sound and fury she came topside and looked around. In that sweet, little girl fashion that can melt any man jack's heart, she simply asked, "Are you gonna' sink our boat?" whereupon she adroitly struck below to await developments. How could any sailor worth his ship's biscuit even think of giving up with a show of strength and prescience like that?

There are some things, like that, can still make me smile all these years later. One of them is certainly NOT the name "Harmony Islands."

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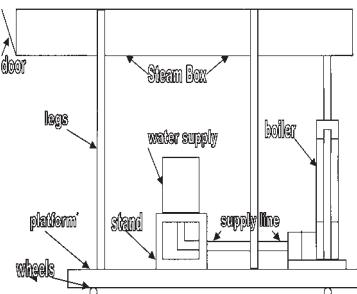
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## The International Scene

The trial of those involved in the breakup of the tanker *Erika* in 1999 off the coast of Brittany has been too long and complex to report here. Suffice it to say that the evidence presented showed that virtually none of the ship's owner, managers, operators or the oil companies, government, classification societies, and so forth met any level of high standards. But some good may come out of the proceedings.

An international convention calling for strict controls on ballast-water management will not go into effect for many years but Norway decided to impose the controls this year on all vessels calling at Norwegian ports.

The Suez Canal offered discounts to encourage Far East-to-U.S. use of the canal in preference to the Panama Canal. And the latter canal's recent announcement of increased rates to pay for the planned enlargement is finding considerable customer resistance.

Britain plans to ban smoking on seagoing and inland waterway vessels.

Queues of ships waiting to load coal in three Australian ports grew to double numbers with possibly as many as 73 ships waiting at Newcastle.

Ship groundings with a pilot aboard cost insurance companies an average of \$8 million per.

A court told striking tugboatmen at Rotterdam to alternate four days of work and five days of strike. The suit was brought by three refineries that feared they would run out of crude oil.

### Thin Places and Hard Knocks

The usual, often heart-breaking sample of accidents and incidents:

*W.D. Fairway*, the world's largest hopper dredge, was sideswiped by the container ship *MSC Joanna* while at work in Tianjin, China, and will be out of action for the rest of the year. Owner Boskalis figures the accident will cost it some \$40 million in lost business.

On the Bosphorus the Russian cargo ship *Glorious* lost steering and crushed the \$300,000 motor yacht *Hatmit* while its owner was having drinks with friends on a nearby yacht.

Due to strong winds in Constanta Sud port, Romania, the Georgian *Chelsea* crashed into the Romanian *Carola* during docking maneuvers.

In Brazil the car carrier *Swift Arrow* ran aground at Paranagua in spite of having a pilot on board.

In Venezuela the panamax bulker *Yun Tong Hai* grounded in the Maracaibo channel and was freed on the fourth try after much of its 53,000 tonnes of coal was unloaded.

In Chesapeake Bay the bulker *Montrose* ran aground and was freed by four tugs after 7,100 of its 74,215 tonnes of coal were off-loaded and the ship was de-ballasted.

The newbuild American tanker *Overseas Houston* was briskly heading towards Tampa for minor modifications before starting its very first charter when the main engine failed. The tanker was towed into Tampa at a slower 5kts.

In the Gulf of Finland, while navigating in a cleared channel through the ice, the product tanker *Sten Nordic* ran up on the stern of a freighter, embarrassing dents but no spill or injuries.

In the Baltic, Polish rescuers removed most of the crew of the Norwegian ro/ro container ship *Ocean Caroline* after hull cracks developed and the ship started listing heavily.

## Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

Off Madagascar the crew of the rice-carrying bulker *Gracia* abandoned ship after its engine failed during passage through a tropical cyclone. They were picked up by the container ship *Ever Gaining*.

On the Yangtze the log-carrying *Shunfeng No. 3* ran aground and caused noticeable changes in the river's current and stone deposits. Removal may be difficult since it is the low water season and dredging will be required.

Off Nagoya the Korean ship *Zenith Light* was taking on water and asked for a tug but contact was lost soon after. A Japanese rescue ship picked up two men but found three empty life rafts.

Off Spain the cargo ship *Osterdijk* had a fire in its cargo of fertilizer and was parked several miles offshore with orange smoke spiraling skyward. Authorities, fearing intoxication of the populace, nixed towing the *Osterdijk* into port but OK'd transfer of its cargo to another vessel.

The Japanese-chartered car carrier *Pacific Angel* collided with a small F/V on the UK's River Tyne. Not much damage to either.

The Japanese ro/ro ferry *Takachiho* unknowingly hit and sank the tuna long-liner *Yukiyoshi Maru* and left three fishermen to float on a raft for three days.

In Uruguay an ammonia leak on the squid-fishing *Bang Joo 7* (Sea World 101) killed five fishermen, injured eight, and caused a total of 24 to collapse.

In New Zealand an investigation delved into why the long-liner *Mi Jay* sank some 80 miles off the Kaikoura coast in 2005. The bodies of two of its crew of three were found on a life raft 11 to 14 days after they died of dehydration, starvation, and hypothermia. They may have been on the raft for a month.

Some accidents happened in port: Two dockers on the bulker *Shining Star* were killed at Dunkirk when a heap of coal collapsed on them.

The heavy-lift ship *Jumbo Challenger* was using two of its cranes to lift a 638-metric ton petroleum reactor at Los Angeles when a cable snapped and the top end of the reactor thudded on the pier. Repairs to both ship and pier were required.

The ro/ro *Republica di Genova* arrived at Antwerp from Italy with 100 containers and 200 new Fiat autos. While loading more cargo at a pier, the ship slowly, inexplicably rolled onto its side. No injuries to the crew. One theory for the roll over is that containers may have contained far more weight than listed in the manifest.

### Gray Fleets

Iran has built what it described as an advanced wale-class submarine and said it had tested the sub's capabilities in comparison with foreign rivals. What a "wale-class" sub is could not be determined by this columnist.

Reflecting Russia's newfound prosperity and perhaps other factors, official military spending has quadrupled since 2001 and it will add new ships of various sizes and types to its navy.

Canada's Coast Guard was accused by that country's Auditor General of poor management and improper maintenance of an aging fleet.

The *Fridtjof Nansen*, one of Norway's newbuild frigates, was not allowed to sail because of the crew's inadequate firefighting skills.

The German minesweeper *FGS Gromitz* (M 1064) ran up on a Norwegian ledge high enough so that it looked, at low tide, like it was leaping off the crest of a wave. Four efforts to pull it off failed and then the 194-ton-bollard-pull platform supply vessel *Bourbon Dolphin* succeeded.

The Australian Navy struggled with multiple problems. Its six Collins-class submarines are depth-restricted because a hose let go on *HMAS Dechaineau* off Perth in 2003 and the sub and its crew of 55 were nearly lost. Now an American company has supplied a flexible seawater hose of greater strength, perhaps enough strength to allow safe return to the old diving depths. A prototype hose will be extensively tested in 2008. And the Collins-class sub's search-and-attack periscopes are nearly 15 years old and are wearing out faster than the repair company can fix them. Luckily the subs are spending less time at sea this year because 30% staffing shortfalls are hampering sub operations.

Australia wants new destroyers and a Spanish firm's air warfare-oriented F100 design is leading the U.S.'s Gibbs and Cox's more capable design based on the U.S. Navy's Arleigh Burke class on price and delivery time. A decision will be made this July as to which design wins the \$7 billion program. In any case, the Aegis-equipped destroyers will be built in Australia with a U.S. firm as systems integrator.

Australian navy technicians are facing strong temptations in Middle East countries. Up to \$1,000 a day tax-free is offered for a five-day-week, nine-to-five shore job and an electrical engineer can earn half a million tax-free dollars for a two-year contract. On board their warships the technicians commonly work 16 hours a day, not always on what they were trained for because of the Navy's general shortage of personnel.

The nine members of the U.S. Navy's new LPD-17 San Antonio class amphibious assault support vessels will assume the functional duties of up to 41 older ships. Names of some of the new ships reflect 9/11: the *USS Somerset* (LPD 25) will remember the heroic passengers on Flight 93 which crashed in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, while the *USS New York* (LPD 21) has a piece of steel from the World Trade Centers built into its stem.

### White Fleets

Normally the several cruise-ferry ships on the Hurtigruten quietly serve Norway's coastal ports, but lately several ships have made the news. One ran aground in the Antarctic recently and a fleet mate took off its passengers. Now the elderly (1956) spare boat *Nordstjernen* had an engine failure and bumped the bottom several times before the naval vessel *Mjolner* took her in tow to Florø. (The *Mjolner* happened to be nearby to assist the grounded German minesweeper *Gromitz*.)

The mayor of Hamburg may have to ban the *Queen Mary 2* and other cruise ships if they cannot reduce in-port polluting emissions to meet European Union regulations. Use of shore electrical power is impractical because the *QM2* would use the same amount of power as 200,000 German residents.

The two Queens, *QE2* and *QM2*, met at Sydney to wild local excitement but the glow was somewhat dimmed for company officials

when a 20-page confidential list of 1,500 passengers and considerable personal data was found on the ground at the Circular Quay.

In Costa Rica a sightseeing party from the *Liberty* was stopped by three ski-masked bandits. One passenger, an ex-military type in his 70s, took umbrage when one bandit put a gun to the head of a female passenger so he strangled the local baddie. The warrior was not charged with murder.

Life on board a cruise ship is not always placid. One was damaged by passage through Cyclone Gamede (yes, even the traditional sliding grand piano) and limped into the isolated port of Antsiranana at the northern tip of Madagascar. There a rope was found entwined in a propeller and it took five days to charter enough planes to fly out the 250 British passengers, mostly elderly. The name of the cruise ship was the *Spirit of Adventure*, a great name considering what had happened.

A disembarking passenger from the *Celebration* at Jacksonville spotted two .22 bullets in the ship's lobby and that set off a profound scurry by authorities, enough so that the ship sailed an hour late.

On the tall ship *Alexander von Humboldt* in the Canary Islands, a 52-year-old German passenger died from natural causes.

In Vietnam the *Aurora* may be too tall to pass under a newly installed cable car system at Nha Trang and may have to offload passengers offshore to smaller vessels.

Although crew members had stocked the ship with sanitizing hand lotions and told passengers not to shake hands, the *Ryndam* had two voyages in a row with tummy bugs as unwanted passengers. Affected each time were the stomachs and intestines of about 10% of passengers and crew. The same ship also had two similar episodes last summer.

Finally, in Mexico the *Regal Princess* scraped the bottom at Huatulco and had to head for a drydock for repairs to a ballast tank. One or more future cruises were impacted.

### Those That Go Back and Forth

Fire broke out on the Haitian sail-powered ferry *Kemeri* and at least 52 went missing or died while two persons were saved by a yacht.

In Indonesia, the ro/ro ferry *Levina I* caught fire and then capsized but somehow more than 290 of its more than 330 passengers survived. The ferry was then towed inshore for inspection by ten officials and media personnel but it suddenly sank, trapping a cameraman and at least two government officials. Indonesia's president immediately warned ferry operators there will be stricter penalties for lax safety practices.

In Washington State the 80-year-old state ferry *Klickitat* developed hull cracks and was taken out of service for hurried repairs.

In the Virgin Islands vehicle ferry service was stopped when a Mack truck rolled off the barge *Roanoke* as it started to back out of the slip. Nearby heavy construction equipment lifted the truck.

In the Philippines the *Superferry 9* developed engine problems and had to be towed into Iloilo.

Salvors refloated the ferry *Mistral Express* off Morocco in spite of numerous breached tanks.

And a judge ruled that New York City could not use the 1851 Limitation of Liability Act to limit to \$14 million all awards resulting from the 1995 crash of the ferry *Andrew J. Barberi*.

### Legal Matters

Twilight Marine agreed to pay a \$150,000 fine to a U.S. court because of "grossly negligent operation" of its bulker *Warrior*. The 39,888-dwt vessel had made two trans-Atlantic crossings with major cracks in its starboard deck taped and painted over.

A Canadian court fined the *Mokami* \$15,000 for unlawful discharge of a pollutant into Arctic waters. It spilled fuel into Coal Harbor, Northern Territories, while unloading cargo.

In Australia the owners of the Panamanian vehicle carrier *Brussel* were fined \$30,000 for leaving a seven-kilometer trail of oil in 2003. Two of the ship's officers were also fined.

In the U.S. a Greek shipping company and a crew member of the bulker *North Princess* were charged with using a "magic pipe" to bypass an oily water separator. Half a million dollars in fines may be the penalty.

New laws in South Australia could result in fines up to \$12,000 and a four-year jail term for illegal fishing.

Finally, three U.K. companies were prosecuted and fined for sending inappropriate waste to the Far East. The waste was household rubbish that included "hazardous" TV sets.

### Nature

Japan has international permission to kill up to 935 minke whales and 10 fin whales each year for "scientific" purposes (but the meat isn't wasted, it eventually appears on Japanese dining tables). Not everyone likes the arrangement, particularly Greenpeace and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, which sent three vessels south to harass and discourage the six-vessel Japanese whaling fleet. It took the two Sea Shepherd vessels six weeks to locate the Japanese fleet.

Then crews in inflatables from the Sea Shepherd's *Farley Mowat* (a self-proclaimed "pirate ship" after Belize pulled its registration) threw smelly but non-toxic butyric acid onto the whale-flensing deck of the Japanese factory ship *Nisshin Maru* while other activists fired smoke canisters, nail-gunned steel patches over the ship's scuppers, and dropped ropes to entangle the ship's screws.

Soon after the Shepherd's *Robert Hunter* and the pirate-flag-flying *Mowat* tried to edge the whale-killer *Kaiko Maru* into the ice pack while it was chasing a pod of whales and the *Hunter* and *Kaiko* collided twice. Both ships were damaged and each party blamed the other. As part of that excitement, two Sheep in a collision-damaged Zodiac managed to get lost in heavy fog so, in full but probably reluctant conformity with international seafaring rules, the Japanese ships offered to help search. The stray Sheep were found unharmed by the *Mowat*.

Next, an engine room fire aboard the factory ship *Nisshin Maru* killed one man, put the ship out of commission, and left it drifting less than 100 miles from one of the world's largest Adelie penguin rookeries. However, the breeding season was nearly over. Over 140 unneeded crew persons were transferred to other Japanese vessels while Greenpeace and Sea Shepherd called for New Zealand and Australia to do something, anything. They found some sympathizers in those countries' governments who were concerned about the fragile Antarctic environment but it

was such a long way to send a ship or plane and what could it do when once there?

Greenpeace's *Esperanza*, an ex-tug and icebreaker, arrived on scene two days after the fire and offered to tow the 8,000-ton factory ship northward. That offer was rejected but the protest ship was asked to stay nearby. Japanese engineers and other crewmen fought and finally killed the fire, got into the engine spaces, found the dead man's body, shipped it off to Japan on one of the smaller ships, and after days of work in the dark, restarted the generator. Ten days after the fire the main engine was restarted. The Japanese waffled for two more days as they evaluated options and then decided to go home, the season was over.

The *Robert Hunter* arrived at Melbourne and may stay there permanently. The *Esperanza* refueled and headed for Japan to resume anti-whaling operations there. As for the flagless *Farley Mowat*, who knows what it will do?

Greenpeace was also active elsewhere. Its *Rainbow Warrior* was denied entrance into Iranian waters as part of a campaign for a nuclear-free region and, in Scotland, its *Arctic Sunrise* plus six smaller craft broke into a restricted area at the Royal Navy's Faslane nuclear submarine base and the former icebreaker was grabbed by MoD police using battering rams. Forty-five protesters were also arrested.

One third of the 15-vessel Finnish oil spill fleet could not respond to a spill because they lack crews. State-owned Finstaship used to find additional work, such as keeping channels open, but commercial competition took away those jobs. Now it will take a day or two longer for spill-response vessels to reach a spill in the Gulf of Bothnia or the Saimaa inland waterway.

In Malaysia a bunker oil spill from the container ship *S.A. Heiderburg* caused moderate cleanup problems. That ship and the tanker *Ocean Sapphire* had collided while leaving the port of Tanjung Pelepas.

Spain had whale problems. The Caddiz-Tennerife ferry *Transmediterranean Sorolla* arrived at Las Palmas with an immature female fin whale impaled on its bow. Divers pulled the 20-ton mammal off the bow. Although the Canaries are famed for their whale population, its waters do not usually contain a fin whale, the second largest of the cetaceans and an endangered species.

And the Spanish Navy, concerned about the presence of dozens of sperm whales and about 260 pilot whales in the busy Strait of Gibraltar, asked ships, particularly fast ferries, to slow down to 13kts. Six pilot whales have been found dead on Andalusian beaches, probably from pollution. That number is higher than normal.

### Nasties and Territorial Imperatives

The Israeli navy fired on three Palestinian boats suspected of smuggling arms and, according to Palestinian sources, two fishermen were injured, one with an arm severed. The navy had tracked the vessels to the Egyptian shore where they made contact with an Egyptian vessel and loaded goods. In spite of the Israeli action, the three vessels reached the Gaza shore.

In the Falkland Islands police chased fishermen who abandoned a Taiwanese fishing vessel. Eight jumped over the side and were found on shore and it is suspected that another two died in a similar attempt.

I built *Kay* ten years ago. Dave Carnell marketed her plans as Nutmeg but she is really a design by Phil Bolger called Featherwind. I remember mostly how I did it and will try to get it all right. I sail her on Long Island Sound, east of the Norwalk Islands, west of Sherwood Island, the mouth of the Saugatuck River.

*Kay* is 16' long, 4'3" beam, draws 3' with the board down, flat bottom, slab sides, tucked-up stern, in short a typical sharpie skiff. Boats much like her were used in this area for clamping and oystering in the 1800s and 1900s before the use of engines in boats.

Carnell's plans were very precise and included Bolger's plans and commentary on the boat. The latter is a good thing because the boat turned out to be more than a Nutmeg but not quite a Featherwind.

The instructions had the usual discussion of tools and wood in the beginning. I ignored the discourse on tools (I have my own prejudices) and started by collecting the wood. The plans call for frames made from pine with plywood gussets, plywood sides and bottom, and pine external chines and external rails. A local woodworking store was going out of business and I found there a 4'x16'x $\frac{1}{4}$ " piece of marine plywood for the bottom. I had to buy the sides, rails, and chines. The frames are fir tongue and groove stock I found in the attic of the garage, left over from some deconstruction.

The instructions start off by scarfing the sides and the bottom together. Well, doing that results in these big and delicate pieces of wood cluttering up the shop, and if the shop is the garage where one's wife keeps her car, then there will be trouble. So I started by making the frames. The plans included full size patterns for the frames so that was easy. The frame at the stern is sheathed with ply-

## Building *Kay*

A Bolger/Carnell  
Featherwind/Nutmeg

By James Fleet



wood to form the transom. There are gussets only on one side of the frames, which is okay and strong enough but I put two on the center frame and filled the gap between the gussets on each side with blocks of fir.

I was quite proud of this solution to an uncomfortable looking on-edge piece of ply-

wood just waiting for a bare foot or other more sensitive part of my anatomy to find it in the midst of some wild maneuver and congratulated myself on this for ten years until two months ago when I found that the elder Atkin had made this recommendation decades before I was born.

Anyway, I stacked up all the frames, made the stem out of a pine 2"x4", made the leeboard, and collected the rig. I will get back to the rig later but it has to be on hand when building the mast steps and partners, and this is the time to make it before the hull. If not, it gets made slowly while looking at the completed boat and watching the sailing season pass by.

After the frames, stem, and stern are ready, the sides and bottom are made using epoxy tape butt blocks. Very simple and still quite strong. My bottom I bought as a 16' sheet, but I just happened to be lucky. Cut the sides to the plans and roughly cut the bottom.

By the way, some pieces have been cut from the bottom panel to make the frame gussets unless the extra sheet of plywood that should have been bought in the first place is in hand. This extra sheet will also be used for the flotation compartments and the second set of fins. I had made the ribs of the frames longer than required so that the frames would sit up off the floor and in correct orientation to each other.

I drove a nail mostly into each rib where the sheer of each side should land. I also put a piece of stock across the open part of each frame to hold the boat open during construction. The frames were held vertical with various baulks of timber and concrete blocks and whatever else I could find. I positioned the sides on the frames and drilled for the screws, then removed the side to install the glue. Stem first, I think, going from there to

Kay rigged with new Laser sail. Leeboard bolts to diamond shaped support on starboard side. Kay rigged as a yawl.



the stern. Don't harden up the fastenings in the stern until done, a little looseness there keeps things happy. I use Gorilla Glue and McFelly's #8x1.25" s/s square drive screws. But more on that later.

Once the sides were on I put on the external chines. These were stock trim pieces of pine from Home Depot, the exact size needed, as were the original rails. But more on that later. No, I'm wrong, the chines had to be ripped with a bevel but it was only one operation. Installation of the chines (and later the rails) will require all of your clamps and your neighbor's. With the chines in place the bottom goes on, the edges are trimmed, and the hull is mostly done.

Make a pair of low but long sawhorses out of pressure treated 2"x4"s. These will be used to rest the boat on for finishing and for winter storage. Turn the boat over onto the sawhorses and begin the inside finishing. When I first looked into building this boat I asked about flotation and was told there were no plans for it. I was resigned to having to develop my own, then got in the mail an addendum to the official plans detailing how to add flotation.

The inside stuff is all straightforward, the only additions that I made were two extra mast steps, one in the bow for the mainsail and one on the port side of the stern. The one in the stern involves a tricky bit of carving and cutting the partners above it had to be done after the stern deck was on because I couldn't figure it out any other way. But more on that later.

I used blocks of styrofoam for flotation. If this styrofoam has to be bought there will enough for about 18 boats. It must grow wild around here because I find it floating in the river all the time. The blue styrofoam sold for house insulation is better than the white if freezing weather is likely.

I made the foredeck longer and stouter to accommodate the partners for the forward mast step. The middle thwart/mast step should probably be built stronger than the plans indicate, especially the carlins that attach the thwart to the sides. I would make them twice as wide and put in more screws. The oarlock locations on the plans do not line up with the thwart, which turned out not to be a problem because in ten years I have yet to row *Kay* except to practice.

Two flotation cushions are just about the right height for a rowing seat but now I use a cooler of appropriate size. The mast step should be installed before the thwart or there will be much bending and cursing. Also do not forget to put fastenings into the mast step or it will rip out during the first sail and force a paddle home (no oars yet).

Later I added a full length floor of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " plywood that sits on top of the middle floor and ends at the juncture of the forward floor and the bottom and the corresponding point in the stern. This makes for a flatter and more comfortable place to sit but adds to the weight. After finishing the hull I painted her grey inside and white outside. The gunwales change color yearly.

Carnell's plan for the leeboard are, I think, just a little off. The first leeboard that I made according to his plans broke during the first sail right at the chine, same day the mast step ripped out. So I made another one out of three layers of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " plywood instead of two, and that one is still going strong.

I found that *Kay* would not point well or tack securely with only the leeboard so I

added three little keel strips on the bottom as shown in the plans for Featherwind and those helped a lot. The center strip gave a bigger place to put a drain hole. I tried to make the rudder shown in the plans but found it too complicated, especially the way the tiller is attached to the rudder head. I ended up taking two dumpster Rudders and putting them together to make one of the size required by the plans. It works pretty well and all the pieces were originally varnished so it looks okay, too. I have an extension on the tiller because I usually sail alone and need to be in the middle of the boat.

The rig that I use is off of an old boat of my brother's that we always called the Maser. Sort of a Laser precursor. The Maser had a kind of melonseed/sneakbox type hull, a small cockpit with hiking straps, and would plane off the wind when first put into the water. After a few hours of sailing the cracks

would open up and the hull would settle lower in the water and refuse to plane. Eventually she became so waterlogged we called her the Submarine. I took her to the dump and cut her in two, the expanded polyfoam was completely disassociated and poured out as little beads.

I kept the rig. It has a two part aluminum mast and a one part boom. The original sail has a concave battenless leech but I sailed it for six years before buying a used Laser sail from a local racer. This one has battens and is not tired and our speed has increased dramatically. We have much more fun now. I reef by wrapping the sail around the mast, moving the clew inboard with a line that keeps it attached to the boom and is controlled by a cam cleat near the gooseneck. This has worked well. With the new sail I have installed a vang. I first attached the vang to the mast step but this put too much



Mainmast in forward mast step for yawl rig. Reefing jam cleat on boom with hose clamp is now attached with aluminum bar stock circle clamp. Vang has not yet been attached.



Mainsheet purchase for yawl rig.



stress on the hull so now it goes to a circle clamp at the base of the mast.

This makes mast stepping more fun, the clamp sits on the step, the mast with sail (no halyards) is put through the partners, then the clamp, then into the step. Then the clamp is tightened and the vang can be installed as needed. The boom originally had only one block at the end and this curved crutch thing that goes through a loop of line at the tack of the sail. I had to make three new circle clamps for the boom; one for the vang, one for the mainsheet block in the middle of the boom, and one at the end of the boom for the mainsheet block and the reefing block.

I bent these out of aluminum flat bar from my local hardware store, not strong enough perhaps for some but they are still working. These clamps are held by stainless steel wing bolts from TV antennas. I have set up a mizzen on *Kay* but have yet to try her out and now probably will not unless I repair the rot in the foredeck. I have rigged her and taken photographs, as you can see.

The fiddly little bits were the most fun to get together. I will let you have the fun of doing them for yourself. The spars for the mizzen are foreshafted aluminum TV antennae. Foreshafting is a Neolithic technique used for arrows, atlatl darts, and spears in areas without adequate long pieces of wood. A weaker species of wood, even reeds, would have a smaller bit of hardwood bonded to each end to facilitate the attachment of the arrowhead and/or the nock.

Likewise I filled the ends of these poles with hardwood dowels or turnings (old shovel handles work well also) to accommodate blocks and goosenecks and the like. Epoxied in place, these foreshafts are strong and avoid having to put hardware into the aluminum.

Things are moving rapidly here this winter. In the Penney Boat Shop, Marty and his volunteer crew have finally put the finishing touches on the Gil Smith catboat. It has been just a few months longer than three years since they started on this project and I'm sure that they are glad to finally be finished. Prior to this, the largest vessel that LIMM volunteers had ever built in the shop was *Barry A.*, SS sloop #155.

The catboat is the largest new construction project that we have undertaken. It is gorgeous and they should be very proud of her. We just received the sail from the sailmaker a few weeks ago and, aside from a few

The one thing I have not done for the mizzen rig is determine the location of the leeboard which I was going to do by trial and error.

*Kay* is kept at the beach on a hand trailer. The trailer is a simple T-form that actually has had more repairs over the years than the boat. The first sides were steel which would last a couple of years before rusting into unworkability. The first few pairs of wheels had ball bearings which with weekly application of WD-40 would last for a year or so before seizing. The crossbar to which the wheels were attached started as a 2"x6", but is now a 3"x4", cut down from a 4"x4". The smaller piece of wood did not have enough bearing for the axle and the "Yield" sign that I used to attach the shaft to the crossbar. The shaft is another TV antennae. Now the axle is stainless steel and the wheels are plastic with no bearings.

I keep the spars in the boat on a rack that fits into the mast step and into a socket near the stern. The leeboard remains attached but everything else comes to and fro. Rigging *Kay* takes about 20 minutes from my door to the water, sometimes more if the wind is strong. If there are whitecaps I will roll in one reef, if lots of whitecaps I will roll in two but would only do that if I had a crew for ballast. Leaving the ramp is usually embarrassing, too many things to do and not enough hands. Eventually we succeed and after the traditional collision with the aid to navigation and the avoidance of the powerboat that shows up just at the wrong moment, we are off around Cockenoe Island and back, another perfect day on the water.

But more on that later, this last section is a little disorganized, more like random thoughts on how *Kay* was designed and built than a coherent discussion.

Square-drive screws were a bad idea, being very difficult to remove for repairs, paint and other goo gets into the square drive recess and is hard to remove. I recommend slotted, as Phillips will have the same problem.

Gorilla Glue lasted for ten years, epoxy lasted for longer, still going strong.

The first chines and rails were pine from Home Depot, the rails have now been replaced because they rotted in many areas after ten years.

The hull has rotted in many areas, also, mostly at the rails from being stored upside down all winter. The rails are now mahogany, stronger and more rot resistant but heavier. Repairing plywood involves cutting scarfed dutchmen and gluing them into place or using thick and clumsy tingles. The plywood is now water saturated and *Kay* is heavier than she used to be.

After ten years of sailing *Kay* and putting her on top of the van, I think that Carnell's design modifications to make *Featherwind* cartoppable affected her sailing and longevity in negative ways. If I were to build her now I would use oak for the ribs, mahogany for the rails and chines, seal all exposed wood with epoxy before painting, move her with a trailer, and try to keep her inside over the winter.

I do not have space inside for her so she lives under a tarp in the backyard. Tarps leak if they are in contact with what they are covering, so build a frame and your boat will last longer. I use a tarp printed with brown camouflage from Northern, easier on the eyes and on the neighbors.

She is a great boat and we have had lots of fun together. It is likely that I will repair her for next year, if only because the latest boat project, a 19' Swampscott dory, is taking too long, as usual.

the spring. Those of you who have been following recent events here at LIMM will note that the restoration of *Querida* has also taken just around three years. This project should have only been around one year but, because of quite a number of distractions that required our immediate attention, it has dragged on far longer than we would have liked.

However, she is almost finished now. The new canvas deck has been laid and the coamings and covering boards are installed. We currently have her tipped over on her port side to work on the starboard side of the hull. Once the hull is finished we will stand her up again, install the floorboards, toe rails, deck hardware, and build the day cabin. She will also go on exhibit in the Small Craft Building this summer.

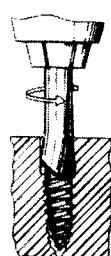
*Gertrude* is just a couple of months away from going back in the water, too. The new floorboards are installed, the engine aligned, and we are varnishing the brightwork. The engine box will go in next week and then we'll wire the engine and bilge pump. After that it's just paint and varnish, a whole lot of varnish!

Spring should be very exciting for us here at LIMM. We should have five small boats tied up to our floating docks in the basin and *Priscilla* will be sailing again. We are trying to clear our decks for *Modesty*'s restoration which will start in the fall.

How to find us: The Long Island Maritime Museum is located south of Montauk Highway (27A in West Sayville adjacent to the County Golf Course at 86 West Ave. Telephone is (631) HISTORY.

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## Long Island Maritime Museum Boat Shop Report

By Joshua Herman

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remaining rigging details that we will take care of in the spring, the boat is ready to be launched. We are going to keep her indoors until her launching at our annual Vintage Boat Show in July. It is tentatively scheduled for 1pm on Saturday, July 14.

Up north in the Moonbeam Shop they have just finished two projects at once. Bob and his crew have been restoring a Blue Jay and building the new raffle boat at the same time. The Blue Jay is a recent acquisition of ours. She was given to us by Ronald B. King of Huntington Station. Now that she is finished, she will go on display in the Small Craft Building amongst our rapidly growing fleet of small one-design sailboats.

The raffle boat is *Whisp*. The guys have been working on her for the better part of a year. She is currently on display in the Museum's Main Gallery. Likewise, one may get a glimpse of her at one of the many festivals along the Long Island south shore in which the LIMM participates every summer. The crew is now beginning the restoration of two newly accessioned boats, a Cottontail and a Sunfish, as well as the 2008 raffle boat.

In the restoration shop (the big plastic tent next to the Penney Shop) we are trying hard to finish both *Querida* and *Gertrude* by

## The Beginnings

I have been an enthusiastic recreational builder for 30 years (you would think I might start to get it right) and a mess abouter for 40 years, starting with canoes and kayaks. I briefly moved to sailing craft and have now returned full circle back to kayaking. Building my own boats is therapeutic, a way to minimize expenses and it enables me to buy more tools.

After a family vacation to Nova Scotia and Cape Breton I decided to build a wooden kayak. It appears that one is never far from a boat builder in Nova Scotia and the numerous marine museums are filled with excellent examples. I purchased dory plans for a future project and looked at literally hundreds of locally built craft. A common theme is to utilize local materials (generally available at the local hardware) to construct unique rowing and sailing craft. A major premise is that YOU CAN DO THIS, TOO. I greatly appreciate the generous Canadians who enthusiastically shared their ideas and invited me into their personal workspaces.

## The Process

In my boat building aesthetics, attending to the process, and avoiding fiberglass are more significant priorities now than in the past. The "stitch and glue" technique allows me to accomplish all three with reasonable success, though weight and cost are still concerns with this method. Marine plywood is expensive and can get heavy after fiberglass sheathing. My current costs are greatly reduced with the use of lumber resawn to a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " thickness sheathed in light fiberglass cloth saturated with epoxy.

More importantly, I have now converted to lauan plywood underlayment (available at any building supply store) as a substitute for marine plywood. Marine plywood is significantly priced and overrated. This article advocates for the use of local materials at substantial savings with little or no apparent reduction in strength or integrity. If one doesn't have the cash for marine plywood at ten times the cost, the judicious use of lauan underlayment can keep the project going. Certainly marine plywood has its place with the professional builder but the cost holds back the garage builder, especially a builder like me who has the next boat started before the last one is completed.

By judicious use, I mean careful selection and preparation of 4mm Philippine lauan underlayment. I regularly cruise the stacks of lauan to view the latest offerings from the Philippines which usually involves pawing through the pile to find a few select sheets that are free of voids, patches, and filler. I don't think patches greatly affect the strength, however, they can be unsightly. Sheets with voids must be culled for additional uses. A good indication of a lack of voids is determined by visual inspection of the sheet edge. A lack of voids on the end/edge grain is a good indication of a suitable sheet. My local building supply stores allow me to sort through the pile and I show my appreciation by leaving the stack neater than I found it.

## Destructive Testing

After extensive use of this product I have not experienced any failures or sinking and have also been able to accomplish some quasi-scientific destructive testing. A subsequent touring kayak was made to the

# Polynesia in Pennsylvania

By Timothy Kananen

approximate lines described in a book published by the Smithsonian (*Bark Canoes and Skin Boats of North America*, p.201). Inuit builders epitomize the home builder. My lack of technique and a change in deck design to an inverted "V" offered a sacrificial piece for destructive testing after I sawed out the cockpit hole from the intact deck.

Sharp blows with a framing hammer would not penetrate the sacrificial piece. To the amusement of friends and family I can place the V-shaped piece on the concrete floor, it is supported only on the edges, and give it a good whack with a hammer. Only limited superficial damage is incurred around the hammer contact area, it is unlikely that water could penetrate and definitely not at a rate sufficient to sink the boat. I also ran a section several times through the dishwasher without any damage or delamination. Another spent several weeks on the floor of our shower again without damage. I'm sold on this stuff and now keep six to eight sheets around for future use with no further need for special requests for funding formerly expensive projects.

Good sheets usually have brothers and sisters close by in the stack. Once one is located you can abduct the whole family and, of course, put the disparaging cousins back neater than you found them with their other undesirable relations. Densities of lauan are variable, to which I attribute a variance in species or growing conditions and probable variance in strength. Consider it a bonus to run into a tribe of this superior variety and reserve it for special high strength areas.



Figure 1: A spring fling in the kayak before alterations.

## The First Boat

Figure 1 is of my early trips in the unaltered kayak. This boat was rejected by a glossy magazine presumably due to a lack of professional standards and refinements and its seditious manifestations. This cannot be ascertained by looks or performance. It costs only about a hundred dollars to build. The major cost is in epoxy resin and fiberglass cloth. The lumber is resawn sassafras boards for the bottom and sides with some leftover marine plywood on the deck. The hull resembles a dory with flaring sides. It was constructed by eye on temporary forms and ended up being 19'2" loa and 26" wide. Draft is insignificant at 2" or less. Performance is very stable and fast.

One drawback is that the boat is slightly heavy due to my inexperience with this technique. Added weight is the result of too much goop and some overbuilding. The overbuilding was turned into an asset later on

when overall hull strength was required to withstand the stresses of sailing. The wood selection is not a huge factor in weight because sassafras is very light and strong. The weight is not limiting because I can lift it single handedly onto my roof racks. The hull is V-shaped for good tracking but not so much as to sacrifice primary stability.

This boat is the one I loan to first time kayakers. They have to really work at flipping it and if they do there are permanent bulkheads at both ends for an added margin of safety. The cockpit is open and very roomy. One may take a nap in the cockpit or stand up if so desired. There is a proud cockpit rim to fend off waves. It is constructed from sassafras, steam bent in full length pieces and joined on the ends. An added bonus is that the rims are particularly stable upside down on roof racks. The heavy rim protects the deck when upside down and provided a secure attachment for the cross beams (akas) when I modified the boat for sailing. The akas lock on the cockpit rim (Figure 2) and during sailing withstand tremendous stress both to the kayak rim and to the cross beams.



Figure 2: Aka attachment to the main hull.

## Getting Started

I sold a sailboat and needed a new project. To begin the metamorphosis from paddle power to wind power, I obtained a sailboard sail, mast, and boom rescued from the scrap heap. Utilizing this sail rig saved a great deal time and money. Retaining the kayak function is desirable to double my fun and still have a trainer for first timers and the timid. Permanent fixtures or alterations to the central hull (vaka) were undesirable and kept to a minimum. A transom and mast step were the only major alterations to the kayak. The overall weight actually decreased because the stern was sawed off to square it up for a transom. The stern bulkhead was maintained with slightly less volume.

## The Details

Four major constructive events were required to convert to a sailing trimaran. I chose the three hull configuration over a catamaran due to presumable improved upwind performance. All sailing points are available to a tri-hull as contrasted to a canoe with a single outrigger.

First the stern was altered to form a transom.

Second I fabricated the rudder from 5mm aluminum obtained from the local scrap yard. The detachable kick up rudder is installed on the transom and can also be utilized for kayaking (Figures 3 and 4). Tiller handle (elm) and remaining wooden rudder top (walnut) resembles a sunfish arrangement with the articulating tiller extension and tiller.



Figure 3: Stern view with kick-up rudder, the "T" on top enables connecting foot controls to the tiller.



Figure 4: Rudder, tiller, and kayak transom.

Third, the crossbeams (akas) were laminated with a gentle curve directly on the boat to get the right shape and then heavily glassed to improve stiffness. Final securing is a lashing to a short stick that spans the interior underside of the deck. This component (not pictured) resembles the letter "H" sideways with the cross piece of the "H" the lashing line with the deck sandwiched tightly in between.

Fourth, amas were constructed from lauan plywood with a stitch and glue method. (Figure 5). I will avoid details about stitch and glue construction and refer the reader to the numerous books and articles on this topic.



Figure 5: Side view. Ama is in the fore ground, inverted end view of the ama on cockpit.

### First Trial Run

Rudder construction was modified after a trial run. The first rudder fuddled. It had insufficient area to allow me to come about without relying on a figure eight pattern. More surface area was required to help turn the now wide sailing platform. Three hulls and a sail stepped well forward need a big rudder compared to a single hull and a Bermuda rig. I'm reminded of a friend's reference to a barn door rudder common to cat rigged boats. I substituted a longer and wider rudder with good results. Rudder profiles can be changed easily with removal of the bolt which permits the rudder to articulate.

When I'm in a pinch I have a handy rule that has wide application. The rule states that if something isn't right then change it to the tune of 25% to 33% and it will be sufficiently corrected. Think about this in terms of a relationship to your spouse or partner in crime. Ten percent has little impact in these occasions and could represent a fluke or chance occurrence. For example, if there is a complaint about the quantity of affection, giving 25% to 33% more will have dramatic effects. The reader may also field test this principle at the local feeding or watering trough. If 16oz is not sufficient, 20+oz will be better suited, and I'm talking about beef in this case. The principle obviously works under a variety of circumstances, please keep it responsible.

Amas and akas were constructed to give adequate lateral resistance retaining low draft and avoiding centerboards, dagger boards, trunks, or lee boards. Akas have a bent shape to help plunge the amas deeper into the water giving additional lateral resistance. The leeward ama is nearly submerged in a moderate wind. Let me tell you it is extremely thrilling to look to the side and see it all happen when you're sitting so close to the action. It is akin to riding a go-cart as opposed to riding in a car. The pavement races by inches away as does the water in this low slung craft.

The amas have a triangular cross-section. The top walnut U-shaped brackets accept the akas and are glassed on top for additional strength (Figure 5). All attachments are friction fits which are then lashed with light line to secure every thing together. The difference between my boat and my Polynesian counterparts is my use of modern materials and more clothes for the crew plus a life jacket. The pictures tell it all (Figure 6). Set up requires 15-20 minutes with lashings taking the most effort (Figure 7).



Figure 6: Aka attachments to the ama.

Figure 7: Assembled trimaran, 16'4"loa, 7'9" maximum width.



### Early Trials

Initial trials were interesting with onlookers and a friend assisting in his small sailboat. It looked pretty good and I could be assured of downwind performance but upwind sailing was a nagging question. Would there be enough lateral resistance to permit upwind sailing? I sail and kayak with a friend Jim who assisted me on these initial voyages along with my family. I keep everyone amused with these sorts of projects. Jim kept joking about the possible rescue and then made statements like "do you need some help" (meaning common sense and brains) and "that is the most unusual boat on the lake." I took the latter as a compliment. I think he was looking for some primitive entertainment and avoiding being the topic of local humor in the newspaper.

To my pleasant surprise she sails upwind and Jim has a new, guarded respect for me. I subsequently lost this respect when I introduced him to winter river kayaking in Pennsylvania. Hey, but what are friends for anyway? I encouraged Jim to buy an inflatable kayak which doesn't flip and is self bailing. I required one final alteration after a high wind trial.

### More Vigorous Trials

I frequently sail on a mountain impoundment in central Pennsylvania. Lake Glendale is horseshoe-shaped and exposed to prevailing westerlies at a high elevation. We are a new home to wind generation which makes for great sailing. Most days are challenging canoeing due to the ever present wind. It was one of those days when one thrill leads to another and one didn't dare relax due to building winds. All muscles are tense and ready to react to adjust trim and human ballast.

After some invigorating broad reaches I attempted a downwind run. Intense speed soon developed and my internal alarm bell sounded. The sail overpowered the boat. On a cat rigged boat this means the bow starts to dive. Water came up over the bow and the cockpit rim was now overwhelmed with small waves and spray. Water was not where it was supposed to be, spray and speed were now major concerns.

Then she began to fill up, first an inch of water, then two, and soon an unwieldy four plus. Hundreds of pounds of water ballast were now sloshing around my waist, legs, and feet. Lucky for me it was summer and warm. The sail was saying go while the boat, with the added weight, was fighting the power of the sail. My alarm grew. I started to worry about broken gear, public embarrassment, and State Park rangers to the rescue. My buddy was enjoying himself further up the lake in a wind that for him is a joy.

After a few attempts to correct, which meant dumping wind and sliding myself further aft, I realized I was doomed to swamping or worse. I managed to let the sail luff, turned, and limped back to the closest protected cove to recover and contemplate the now feared broad reach back to the dock. I did manage to regain most of my original position by sailing upwind. I was almost directly across the lake from where I set out. Full recovery time was extended due to my toy bucket which was able to remove less than 1% at a bail (note to self, carry a bigger bucket next time).

After drying out and inspecting the boat for broken parts I took a few deep breaths

and set out for the dock. The wind was becoming intense and about double what was desired. All my tricks and luck were required. I set out with some cove protection which was soon lost to the direct winds coming down five miles of lake. I dumped as much wind as I could and still make progress. I positioned myself to give additional ballast and took off like a rocket. I made it back, it was a close one and I was humbled. I could have paddled back with the stowed canoe paddle but that would be a small defeat.

I rethought my whole plan and decided to take full advantage of the Polynesian idea. Everything on a Polynesian craft is movable due to multiple lashings and components. A quick solution easy on this trimaran is to move the amas forward one foot or so which supplied more buoyancy towards the bow. I could potentially revert to the former arrangement in lighter winds. The change was successful. Presto! I can now sail in high winds and make it back. In addition, I carry a bigger bailer. I have limited on the water pictures except during calm winds (Figure 8).



Figure 8: Light winds on Lake Erie.

A trimaran is a delight even in light winds. The open cockpit is large enough to lie down in and relax. The three hulls make an excellent swim platform. I can swim between the hulls and because the aka is so low to the water getting back in is no chore. My next alteration may be a crab claw sail which I feel will be better balanced or perhaps adding a mizzen. A paddle assist is easy with the rudder

providing directional control but who would want that except in dire circumstances?

#### Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements are many, too long a list over a long personal history of boating. Mentors are friends, teachers, and boaters who shared their ideas. This article is made possible by the many mentors and some didn't even realize they were mentors. It begins as a teenager whose parents and friends whose parents have similar thinking encouraged canoeing on small rivers and streams. That really gets things rolling and satisfies a young person's need for independence and adventure.

My plug is for more mentoring to help counter those trends now so apparent that threaten our youth, our environment, and entire culture. I'm referring to the realm of personal experience that is relegated to virtual and once removed realities that perpetuates violence that now contaminates most of our days. This type of fun masquerades as entertainment and fuels more of the same. Mentoring a stewardship to former lifestyles and reverence for the wind and the waters has never been so important. Outdoor recreation is the anti-venom for this contrived poison. Let's work to involve more people in wholesome activities.

Some of my mentors (currently at age 51) are the builders and authors who contribute without monetary return to *Messing About in Boats*. A special thanks to Robb White for his many contributions. All of the articles are a joy and my favorites that pertain to this article are "Sedition" and the series on Polynesian sailing craft. These types of articles keep me, and I'm sure many others, fresh and enthusiastic about building and boating. Special thanks to my wife and editor, without her it don't flow.

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Boat buried in the snow.



Very dirty boat needing a lot of TLC.

### In My Shop

## The Gift Boat Renewed

By Mississippi Bob

I wrote some time ago about the gift boat that I was given. This boat was an Eddyline San Juan kayak. It had had a very tough life, been cut up and had holes cut into both the deck and in the hull below the waterline. There was hardware attached all over that I removed and some windows in the bottom that I also removed. This project got moved to the back burner in November a year ago as I had other things that held priority, like my Ratty's Boat.

Before I put the boat into storage I made a couple fiberglass boards to cover the holes where the windows had been in the bottom. These boards were simply three layers of 6oz glass that were laid up over waxed paper taped to the hull near where the holes were. I wanted the boards curved to match the curve of the hull at the windows. The boat then got stored for over a year outside my shop on the west side where it was hidden by some shrubbery.

In January, after the holidays were history, I drug the boat out of the snow and put it in my shop to clean it up and appraise it. It was really a mess. There were two holes in the bottom the size of dinner plates and a couple more that were about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter. There were holes all over the deck, about 150. No kidding. I counted 80 on the starboard side alone. The worst damage done was that the stern had been sawed off. Three-and-a-half feet of the boat had been removed, then reattached with some fasteners.

Repairing this boat would require basic boat repairing skills, not rocket science. The hardest part so far was to remove the caulk that surrounded the big holes in the bottom. The windows had been bedded in with some caulk that really wanted to stay put.

I spent several hours with a sharp wood chisel and pliers cutting and pulling the caulk off. I finally got enough removed so I could begin sanding. I started with my Porter Cable random orbit sander with 60 grit paper. This cleaned off most of the remaining caulk. Then I switched to my Bosch sander that has a more controllable feel and cleaned the inside of the hull several inches around the holes. I didn't try to feather out the edges at this time as the hull is only about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick at this point. I wanted to leave some body to glue to.

One hole in the bottom will have to wait as it is right next to the forward bulkhead and I didn't want to attack that problem yet. The boat originally had two bulkheads that were made from some closed cell foam, one in front of the bow paddler's feet and the other behind the rear seat. They will both have to be removed and replaced but not yet. At this time the boat is still 17' long and I decided that I would fix a bunch of holes first, then worry about putting the stern back on.

I had the biggest holes prepped for repair so I will start there. I set the hull on some short sawhorses so it was at a comfortable height. I next found the boards that I had made the year before. I sanded both sides of these boards mostly to clean them up and remove any big bumps. The Bosch did this quickly. Now, one at a time, I held the boards over the holes on the outside of the boat and drew pencil lines around the holes from the inside.

I brought the boards up to my bench and drew another line about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " outside of the first line. Next I sawed out the patch that would get used. A quick sanding of the edges and these boards were ready to glue in place. I mixed some epoxy and added some micro balloons as thickener. The edges of the holes got buttered up and the board laid into place. To hold them down I used sand bags put inside of bread wrappers. I didn't want to glue the sand bags in.

When this resin had cured I cut some glass patches that overlapped the boards by a couple inches on each edge and a second layer of 6oz 1" bigger than the first. These got wet out, then I laid strips of Peal Ply over the edges of the patches to keep them smooth. Structurally the window holes are now closed up. I will have to do a lot more work on the outside to further reinforce the areas and to fair them up.

The next repair I made was to begin closing up holes in the sides of the hull. To do this I hung the boat on its edge in some rope slings. They were attached to "I" bolts in the ceiling of the shop. I brought the hull up to a comfortable working height and did one side at a time. I sanded all the areas around the holes and began cutting patches that would cover the holes. Some were postage stamp-sized patches but many of the patches covered multiple holes as there were so many and they were so close together. Most of my work is done with 6oz glass as that is what I can get easily. This I feel needs at least two layers so the second patch is cut slightly larger. I next cut Peal Ply patches to cover the glass patches.



Looking into the forward cockpit showing the hole where the motor well had been. Notice white caulk where a soft motor well had been removed.



Fiberglass board laid into bottom before getting glassed in.



Bottom view of patch after cure, looking into rear cockpit at fiberglass board cemented unto bottom. Notice resin oozing out.



When one side was ready and all the patches were laid in place dry I mixed a small batch of epoxy and began wetting out the patches one at a time making sure to cover each patch with the Peal Ply as I went. When this had cured up I rolled the boat onto the other edge and did the same thing.

When that cured the boat got hoisted higher and slung up side down near the ceiling so I could stand up with my head inside the boat and do the holes in the deck. Some of the holes were large enough that I covered them with smaller pieces of the glass boards cut out of scraps from the earlier repairs.

Most of the holes are now covered over and my next operation will be to remove the rear bulkhead. I didn't want to do this sooner as the boat is quite flexible without it. The bulkhead has to come out as the boat was cut

Now that I am back from a week on the Riviera Maya it is time to began putting the Eddyline back together. The first thing that I must do is to roughly sand the edges of both sections where the boat was sown off. I must clean and sand back a few inches to get a really good surface to which my repairs will bond.

The old caulk has been the biggest problem so far in this restoration and now both parts that need to be bonded are covered with the stuff. It must all come off. I tied the stern section to a bench and began to scrape and sand the inside of the hull. An hour later I was satisfied that it was clean enough so it was time to start removing the stern bulkhead. This bulkhead is only  $\frac{1}{2}$ " from where the boat had been sown off so the bulkhead had to go. That was the easy part. A few minutes with a keyhole saw and the bulkhead lay next to the hull on the floor.

I was right about expecting the boat to be very flexible without the bulkhead in place. I had to be very careful handling this part as the deck was free to spring up and down several inches. Making matters worse, there were some missing supports for the rear seat. The seat supports were foam blocks fitted between the bottom of the seat and the boat bottom. They are a part of the overall stiffness that is built into the hull.

The bulkhead that I had removed was made from some closed cell foam about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " thick. I would use this same material to build new seat supports.

I had a feeling that the hull had been flattened out some from sitting so long without the stern section to support it. I put a temporary prop inside the opening raising the deck about 1". I then made patterns for the new seat supports from cardboard. I made two supports that would be installed from behind the seat and one that went in from the front. I sawed these out of the old bulkhead.

The hull got somewhat stiffer with the seat supports in place. Now it was time to start cleaning up this area prior to the sanding. This was done with the wood chisel and a pair of pliers. I pulled at an edge of the caulk and sliced through it as close as I could with a sharp chisel. This was slow work but it had to be done. This was followed with some #40 grit on the sander.

I cleaned in about 6" toward the rear seat. I needed a space to install my new bulkhead. The new bulkhead went in about 6" forward of its old location. There was a good spot just behind the rear seat so I made a cardboard pattern to fit inside the hull at this point.

Cutting the pattern was a no-brainer. I simply started at the rear cockpit and fitted



Another view of board glassed into bottom and covered with Peal Ply.



Bottom view of patch in stern.

edges could be cleaned back a couple inches where the two parts will re-attach. This operation will be explained in my next article

## In My Shop

# Putting It Back Together

By Mississippi Bob

and trimmed as I moved it back. The hull narrows rapidly at this point. Soon it fit well at the final position. I then transferred this pattern to a piece of 4mm marine ply and sawed it out. I then did a final fitting and sanding. When I was satisfied I pulled it back out and painted both sides with epoxy and let it cure.

When this epoxy cured I pushed the bulkhead back into place and began tabbing it in. I began by doing a fillet across the bottom both forward and aft of the bulkhead. I was working through the cockpit opening on one side and through the open stern on the other I then tabbed this same section and covered it with peal ply. The next day I rolled the boat over and did a fillet around the rest of the bulkhead and tabbed the rest in.

When the new bulkhead was in and cured the boat was much stiffer. Time to re-install the stern 3'. The areas on the sides of the cut were riddled with holes where I had drilled out the hardware store fasteners that held the stern on. These holes would be handy to wire tie the section in place.

I started the operation with the boat upright. I fastened a pair of 2" wide plywood pieces to the hull one on either side of the keel. These were simply screwed through with drywall screws. These pieces were about 4' long. They went forward under the cockpit and extended back about 2' beyond the cut off.

I set the stern section on top of these wood strips and found that it was going to be a close fit. I raised the stern a little with a foam pad wedged in until the top of the seam was close also. The bottom of this seam closed up nearly perfect so I screwed it into place to hold it there. I next began with wire ties to close up the top of the seam. I got it close, not perfect, but close enough so it was time for the epoxy again.

I next covered the outside of the seam with duct tape to keep the resin from just running through. Then I cut some 6oz cloth making a 4" wide patch about 10" long and laid it dry over the inside of the seam to one side of the keel area. Satisfied with this, I cut another slightly wider to cover the first and

then a piece of peal ply. Now I did the same on the other side of the keel.

These first two patches would cover about 20" of this seam but not in the center where the screws were that held the part in place. I wet out these patches and let them set for a while. Later that day I came back and removed the screws and patched the area of the keel.

The next day the boat was rolled over and hoisted on the slings so it was high enough to stand up and work inside through the rear hatch. I played around with the wire ties, trying to get the joint as close as possible. I had to remove some of the ties to get a couple of sizeable areas to lay on some patches. This entire operation took several days as I could only do a small section at a time and the epoxy cures slowly in my never warm enough shop.

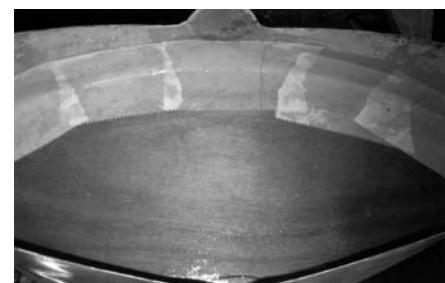
The stern was now on and I had a new problem. The bow touched the back wall of my shop and the stern almost reached the door of my shop. The rest of this job will have to be done by either ducking under the boat or opening the door and walking around the end of the boat. This is the first time my shop ever held a 20' boat.

My next job will be to double check that all the holes have been filled and then start smoothing up the exterior. That will be my next article.



Wire ties holding the stern in place.

Tabbing in the bulkhead.





# Marlinespike.com

By Timothy Whitten, Ph.D.

Hello, I am new to *MAIB* both as a subscriber and an advertiser. I have an interest in the maritimities that has grown over the years but was instilled as a youth growing up in New England where I spent many hours at Mystic Seaport and days at various points along the Maine coast. One thing in particular that fascinated me was the knot work and rigging associated with square rigs and the fancy work produced when the practical was transformed into art. That fascination has stayed with me and for the past five years I have been operating a business called Marlinespike.com at which I make and sell various items of fancy knot work and some associated tools.

The phrase that I like to use to describe my work is functional and decorative knot work and rigging. I use the word functional because items like my fenders are made for work. The decorative aspect comes about, like many other mundane items produced by skilled craftsmen, from the incorporation of beauty and complexity, simply because it

can be.

I'm sure I have already met some of you at various events and hope to see you again in the future. This year I have three events still scheduled, The WoodenBoat Show in Mystic, Connecticut, The Antique Boat Show in Clayton, New York, and the Wooden Boat Festival in Port Townsend, Washington. If you can't make it to any of those events, please take a look at my web site, [www.marlinespike.com](http://www.marlinespike.com), to see what I have to offer in the range of bell ropes, sea chest beackets, and fenders, or just send an email to me, [tim@marlinespike.com](mailto:tim@marlinespike.com), to say hello.

Be sure to check your spelling, I use an older variation of the word marlinespike which has an "e" in the middle. I welcome all custom project inquiries.



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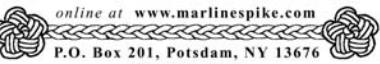
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Old timers may remember "Tirade Time," an incipient series inspired by Dusty Rhoades' comment on one of my pieces. The thing never really got going. Not for lack of subject matter but, I prefer to think, because of my sunny disposition and upbeat outlook.

Dusty is over the horizon now, where the wind is always at his back. I got to thinking about him the other day as I was running around the Junction trying to find a belt for my table saw. "How big a problem can that be," you are asking. Exactly my thought as I started out.

Some time in the dim past Monkey Ward sold table saws with an universal motor mounted on the tilting carriage and driving the arbor with a toothed belt. I bought one early in my career with a lovely chrome table. Dramatic weather changes back in Virginia would leave the machine tables covered with condensation so this outfit was a winner.

Years ago the motor went bad. I forgot the problem, bearings, I suppose. The disassembled motor is still sitting in a box under the saw. I just picked up a yard sale motor and kept going (I have five currently). Now, however, at long last the belt broke.

I took the broken belt, which had a nice clear number printed on it, and went straight away to a professional tool repair shop. The fellow behind the counter just glanced at the limp corpus and began pulling packaged belts out of his display case. One by one these were carefully opened and the occupant compared with my original. Nothing matched, but I learned.

A number only means something to the guy who originates it. If he doesn't share, it's worthless. Forget the number. Consider how many ways one of these belts can vary, number of teeth, tooth spacing, tooth profile, tooth height, and you have a marketing man's delight. The customer has to come back to the original builder.

I learned many years ago, after spending a good bit of time standing at the Sears' parts counter, that bearings are pretty well standardized. Apparently bearings were developed while engineers were still in charge. Just throw your noisy bearing on the counter at the bearing house and the guy will mike it and hand you a new one for a fraction of what the OEM wants.

## Tirade Time

By Jim Thayer

So I went to Sears, which took over some of the Wards tool line but not, apparently, the problem table saw. I tried the bearing house with really serious effort but no luck. A power transmission place with a counter long rack of those big books that are the backbone of our industrial society seemed promising. They tried and tried but came up empty.

I dangled it in front of the Grainger man but he just waved me away. I tried a couple of really long shots then, clutching at straws, ran by a vacuum cleaner place. They had a little bitty one that ran the brush. Not even close.

By this time I could feel a full-blown, fulminating, tooth gnashing tirade coming on. I resolved to throw myself on the tender mercies of the resourceful MAIB folk and maybe drop a note to *Fine Woodworking*. I thought maybe some web meister could find something. I soon cooled down. It wasn't like I was down to my last table saw.

Some months later I ran across the manual and parts list for the sorry thing. Evidently at a loss for something to do, I confronted the computer and punched in Wards Powcraft (sic). Eureka, first try. Ain't technology wonderful? Home free! Well, not quite free.

The belt, maybe 6" long, would be \$16.50 plus \$5 shipping. To be generous, it might have cost a dollar to make the thing. But what is one to do? They had me by that classic hold. I can't wait for the day when every piece of junk is a custom built one of a kind. Maybe by then one can buy a box of nanobots which will fix anything.

Toolkraft apparently built a number of different house brands. If you have some sort of orphan they may be worth a try: Toolkraft Parts, P.O. Box 80777, Springfield, MA 01138-0777, (413) 737-7331, parts@toolkraft.com

So I've got the belt. Is that the end of the story? Ha! You know better than that. We have to install it. It is a simple matter if we follow the instructions in the manual and work through the hole in the top as suggested. Well, we finally get the pulley off with a puller. Simple yes, but tedious and hard on the knuckles.

All these timing belts operate under considerable tension. Can we get it on working through the table top. No way! Sacrificing skin is no help. We will have to go at it from the bottom but the saw is mounted on a factory stand which the previous owner had enclosed to contain the sawdust. Getting the thing apart will be a major undertaking.

Leafing through the manual I note that one is supposed to check the brushes every ten hours! That would be a nuisance even from the bottom. Having worn out the belt, it is high time the brushes were checked.

What's called for here is a bold stroke. Thinking outside the box, or maybe disassembling the box. Alexander is our inspiration. I first employed this technique years ago on a particularly obscene washing machine.

Grabbing my saber saw I pull up a chair and cut the side right out of the case. There are the brushes right under my nose. Also, while comfortably seated I detach the saw from the base. Flipping the saw upside down I have enough elbow room to persuade the recalcitrant belt into place. I'll probably put a plywood cover over the hole but I'll wait and see how much sawdust blows out.

Did I beat the system? Well, you'll have to judge for yourself, bearing in mind what a boatbuilder's time is worth. Life is short. Still, a hard won victory is sweet.

**Postscript:** Our Editor sent the above copy back because his scanner couldn't read it. I used to send him floppies and there was no problem but somebody gave him a newer outfit and it doesn't read floppies. He is leaving me in the dust on his dirt road!

I didn't think the print looked that bad but on my next effort (now in limbo) I realized the print was poor on the bottom of the letters. I cleaned the cartridge face but with small effect. Thinking I detected a slight bulge, I worked on it with my thumbnail. Then the machine wouldn't even recognize it. There went my chance to get it refilled.

You guessed it! The old Brother word processor cartridge is extinct. Try the web everybody suggested. Oh dear!

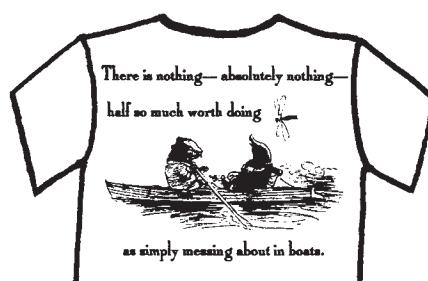
I am pounding this out up at the ranch where I have an even older Brother word processor. It uses a carbon tape just like the ones currently for sale. Well, it's probably not just like. You'll hear from me soon enough if it isn't.

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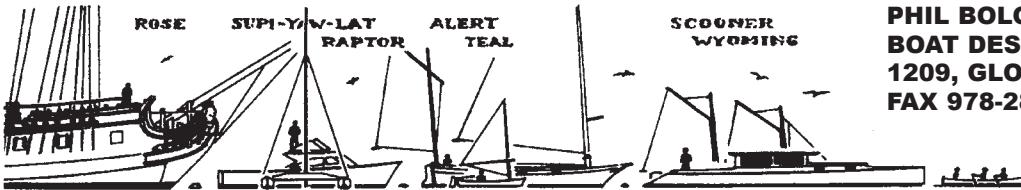
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We wrote up the Le Cabotin project in detail in *MAIB* Volume 20, Numbers 14 and 15, in December 2002. Then we offered a report on the progress the owners/builders made in Volume 22, Number 15, in December 2004. She's the 11.5m (38') by 2.4m (8') x .33m (1') oceangoing sharpie shown in its original form in Chapter 70 of our book, *Boats With An Open Mind* (McGraw-Hill), also known as *Loose Moose II*. This first hull was built in and cruised from northern France via the Mediterranean to the West Indies. As a six-month "fisherman's finish" construction effort (!) she was primarily intended for import living in warm places.

Our earlier essays explained why Jean and Gabrielle Gauthier's rendering needed upgrading from the original stark machine, namely that they intended to spend several

## Bolger on Design

### Le Cabotin/*Anemone*

4-Part Progress Report on Design #576  
(Upgraded)

#### Part 1

years cruising from Quebec across the North Atlantic, up the Baltic, and across Russia to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, and back to America. The time offshore and the northern climate to be encountered were the main points driving the additions and alterations. The Gauthiers set out on, and finished, the job of building an Atlantic-proven

liveaboard with four Quebec season credentials, which by design and their careful construction is expected to be unsinkable to boot. How many people and boats like this exist anywhere?

We went to Montreal in October '06 to see her afloat. They had been living on board since her launch in midsummer, now moored in a sheltered riverine berth with no shore connections across from a friend's landing. That day the weather had been cold and wet with snow in Vermont. Just as we arrived and first caught sight of her the sun came out and showed off her gleaming warm two-tone yellow finish.

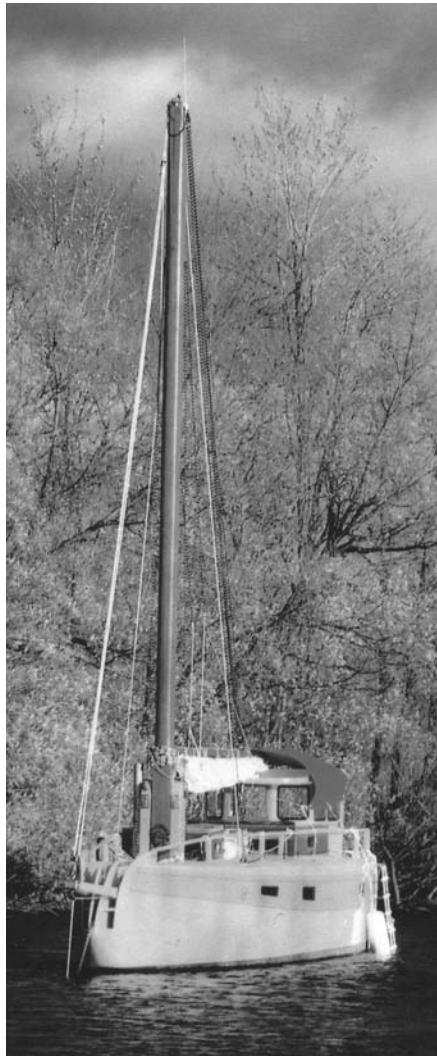
In "the flesh" this boat has more character yet than assumed from her drawings. Her appearance grew out of the need to pursue utter simplification for her capability, far



from the current conventional wisdom. She is designed to be a minimum "go-anywhere" boat, including into wading draft places, onto beaches and flats, through narrow canal locks, and under low bridges with only a brief interruption of her sailing capability, as well as being fit to go off soundings. This approach enabled her to be built over six short Quebec springs and falls in a barn by a couple whose prior experience was confined to the construction of a 16' pirogue for day boating and camp cruising.

We just stood there for a while and let the sight of her sink in. After a few photos required Susanne dashing about to capture the sudden but fading sunlight, Gaby and Jean came to notice our presence and we met for the first time person. Our 12/15/06 essay shows us warming up to each over Fast Brick (#663). Then they ferried us to Anemone and we got our first up-close impression of the quality of workmanship.

Her finish shows no signs of corners cut with neat filleting everywhere connecting 600-grit surfaces in all axes. High-end painted finish is matched by very clean window installations and deep varnish on selected exterior surfaces. We could not tell fiberglass cloth was anywhere underneath the finish but noticed indeed a very effective clean application of anti-slip on her deck surfaces. Mechanical detailing from outboard remote controls, over stove installation, to ground tackle arrangements (exactly to plans) are extremely neat and handy in their ergonomics.



For a few weeks she sneaked about without any discernable identification on her hull apart from her color and distinctive silhouette! Once intended to be called *Le Cabotin*, a quick check with the authorities discovered the sober reality that the name was already in use and *Anemone* it would be from then on.

She lay moored bow and stern just clear of the wooded shore. Even shifting winds of the storm predicted two days ahead would still keep her out of the channel without stretching the warps of the two anchors too tightly. The boarding arrangements were not complete but it was easy to see how well it would work with a stern platform in place to be built this spring. The tender was left afloat next to the temporary boarding ladder. For passages it would be hoisted onboard to a secure location ahead of the helm shelter. We took some on deck photos and retreated to her warm cabin.

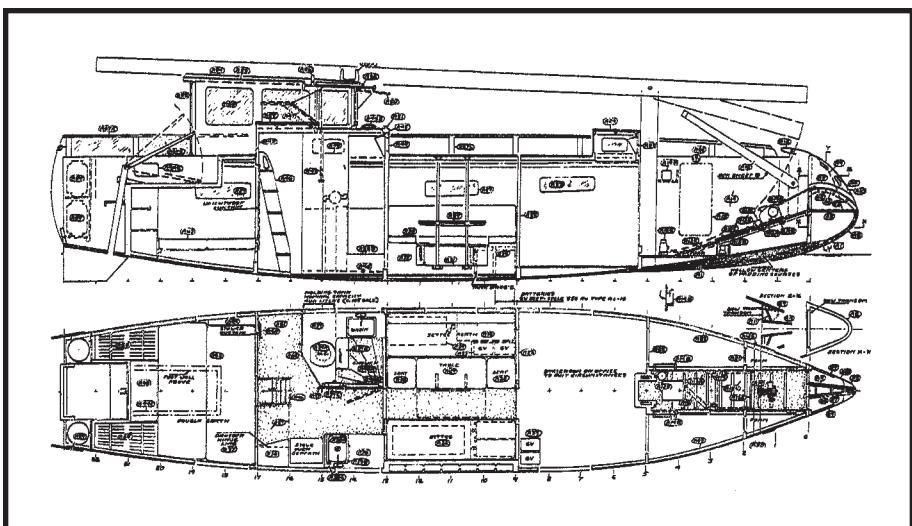
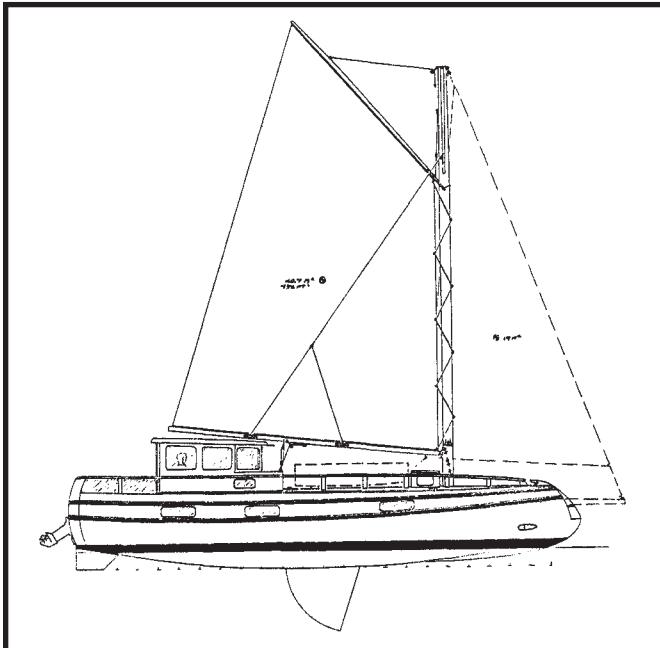
Her interior was not complete in all cosmetic detail but with various built-in ingenuities had already proven to be liveable. This year we hope to get a few shots of the perfected cabin. The layout abaft amidships is as designed. The bay just forward of amidships, left open on the plans, had desk and storage

space with more detail work to be done over the winter. Surrounded by a warm glow of varnished maple (what else up north) the evening was convivial with much congratulation on their achievement. We wished our French was as good as their English. They offered us the big double berth under the cockpit for two nights and we passed them in agreeable comfort. As on our *Resolution* it is pleasant to be able to casually raise your head to see what the weather and the wildlife are doing...

One photo shows her set up for the rainy weather on the morning of our departure with a tarp over the helm shelter standing room, as a matter of easing the strain of a storm on the ground tackle the fully balanced mast was lowered as a matter of course.

Now with just a few residual jobs left to be done, she has served through her first winter since her launching during which both lived aboard her. As it happens they "parked" her in an industrial park close to Jean's seasonal work. And if the winter rigors of the continental climate of Quebec can be lived through aboard, most other colder destinations will not be readily dismissed from the list of potential waypoints on their multi-year itinerary. As stated elsewhere, her foam insulation triples also as structural reinforcement versus the original barebones thin skin  $\frac{1}{2}$ " topsides and serves as full positive buoyancy; that is, unsinkability, a matter seemingly of no interest in nearly 100% of all custom and production cruisers out there...

Plans of Design #576, including the *Le Cabotin* plans with those of the lighter and cheaper, but less capable, original version, are available for \$500 to build one boat, sent priority mail, rolled in a tube; nine 22"x34" sheets of drawings and detailed keyed specifications, from Phil Bolger & Friends, Inc., P.O. Box 1209, Gloucester, MA 01930, U.S.



"Let's go fishing Saturday!" These were the words that set Dad and me into motion to get things ready, load the gear in the car, contact friends to see if others wanted to join in. On the way to the boat we would buy the bait shrimp (large enough for three sections of bait per shrimp). While we sometimes had the boat on a trailer, most of the time the boat (all 18' or so) was at a local marina. We would bail out the boat, start the engine, and go out on the flats to drift fish. The idea was to get upwind and then ride the wind and tide back towards the marina while we fished for trout (or whatever) in the flats of Sarasota Bay.

If the wind and tide were in opposite directions the forces would sometimes almost cancel each other out and the boat's movement over the ground would be minimal. Since we were out for the boat ride and enjoyment of the time on the water, such lack of movement was of little concern. In fact, catching fish was also of little concern. The fun was the trip and companionship.

Usually we fished with floats. But sometimes we would bottom fish. The problem in either case was a catch of a discarded item that had sunk to the bottom. In one case two of our friends had a catch. Both were bottom fishing and one had started to reel in the line to check the bait when the other exclaimed, "I got one!" and flicked the rod to set the hook. The first person said, "Me, too," and hauled back on the rod. Both were now engaged in bringing in their catch. After a minute or so of watching the two rods bent toward the boat, my father suggested that they had caught each other. One person let out on his line while the other reeled in his line. Guess what! There were the two hooks joined together quite nicely (and neither had bait).

At one point we had the boat berthed at a marina on the Bradenton River. The mooring was stern to the wharf with the bow line connected to a bridle with a concrete block on one bridle line. The arrangement kept the stern of the boat away from the pier and still let us pull the stern in for boarding. It worked quite nicely as long as the block stayed attached to the line and the pulley was lubricated from time to time. Until the economical availability of floats for under the piers, most boats had to be secured in tidal waters with some type of the line-o-a-block arrangement. Floating piers demanded pilings to secure them to the desired location. One alternate arrangement to the cost of pilings

## From The Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

was to secure pipe to a fixed portion of the structure with the other end buried in the bottom that allowed the floating section to slide up and down the pipe.

At one point my Sisu 22 was "berthed" using a cradle that was hoisted out of the water when the boat was not in use. To access the boat when it was in the water I needed a floating finger pier and I did not wish the expense of additional piling to hold the floating section in place. Hence, I used a variation of the pipe in the bottom idea. In this case both ends of standard lengths 2" galvanized water pipe were connected to elbows and the elbows connected with short pieces of pipe to flanges lag-bolted to the pilings that held up the boatlift assembly. A loop made of  $\frac{1}{2}$ " galvanized pipe sections lag-bolted to the floating finger pier connected the floating section to each pipe and all worked as desired. The "floats" were closed-cell Styrofoam with a latex paint-concrete mix slathered over the outside to protect the foam.

The electric winch-cable arrangement to hoist the Sisu 22 out of the water was designed to be used either from the dock or from the boat. The switch for boat use was mounted on one of the vertical guides that helped center the boat on the cradle. We boarded the boat, used the switch, and lowered the boat to the water. This was sort of neat until I came back one day to find the switch about 8" out of the water (the tide came in further than expected while we were out boating). I stopped using the "boat switch" at that point and disconnected it from the system.

Another time I was raising the boat after a sailboat race with my wife onboard when one of the cables broke, dropping the stern of the boat into the water. My wife fell against the stern seat and was saved from injury by the two inflatable marks we had taken on board to bring back to shore. Also, the boat was only about 2' out of the water (instead of the 8' when fully raised) so the fall was not that far. Thereafter the boat was raised and lowered with no one on board.

The boat lift saved us the cost of the annual bottom job, removed the concern about a leak filling the boat when we were

not around, and was generally very satisfactory. However, we do not leave our boat in any type of lift when a hurricane/tropical storm is coming our way. Thus, when Hurricane Kate was forecasted to hit our area, I went down and lowered the boat. I left the cradle assembly in the full down position, turned off the power to the dock, stripped the boat, and tied the boat up at a friend's dock. Everything came through fine.

One of my neighbors had his boat in a sling lift and it was damaged by the onshore wind that banged it against the supports. Another had the drain clog and the boat filled with water breaking one of the straps and putting the boat stern down into the water. Even when there was not a tropical storm on the horizon, rain from afternoon squall lines and general thunderstorms can fill up a boat in a sling or lift. To help avoid the problem, I had the float switch bilge pump assembly always on when the boat was in the cradle. A neighbor once commented that it was a bit strange to see the bilge water coming out of the boat when it was up in the cradle.

Leaving the boat in the water when a hurricane is in the forecast is not the best solution. However, in this case, by the time I knew I needed to pull the boat the winds were too high to safely move it onto its trailer. Because the storm was breaking up and came through at less than high tide, I lucked out. Another few feet of water and a Category 2 storm and I could have had a boat on the bottom with a manufactured house on top.

If a boat has to be left in the water when a major storm is approaching, adequate mooring lines are a major consideration. I was at a meeting the other day where a person who lost his boat during Hurricane Katrina remarked that all the lines on his boat had failed, allowing the boat to be pushed ashore by the wind and waves while a boat nearby came through fine. It seems that the second owner remembered that nylon line has a tendency to heat up inside and eventually fail when put through a lot of strain/relax/strain/relax sequences. Thus, he tied the boat to the floating pier with his regular lines. Then he added lines that were  $\frac{1}{2}$ ' longer than the first set. Then he added a third set of lines that were 2' longer than the second set. The first two sets of lines failed but the third set lasted through the remainder of the storm and the boat was not damaged.

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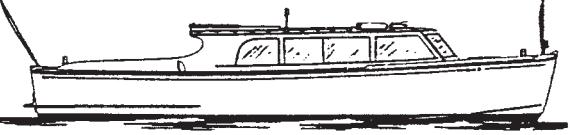


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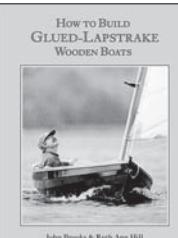
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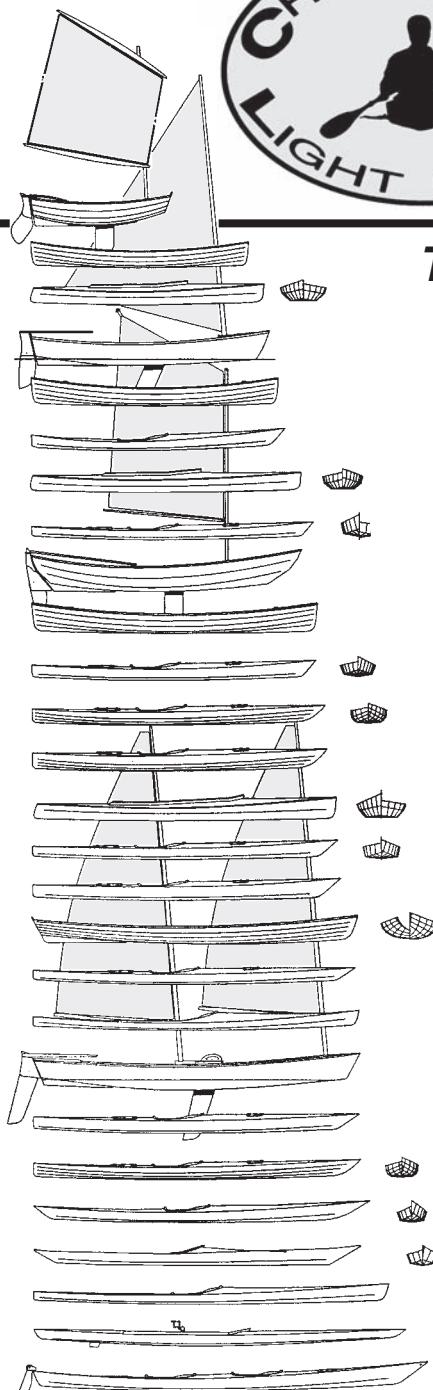
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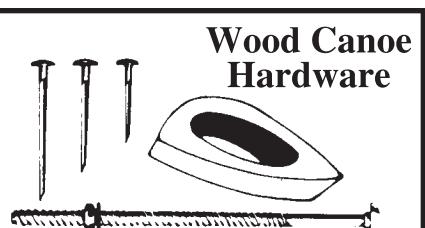
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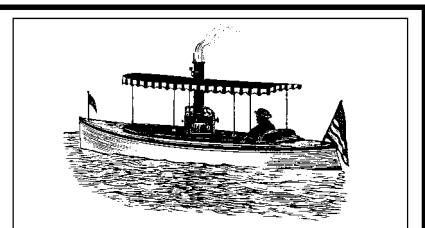


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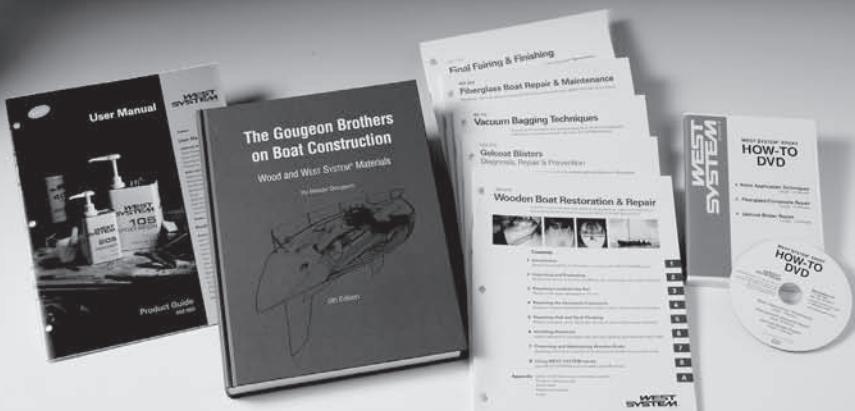
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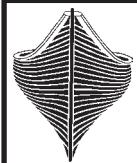
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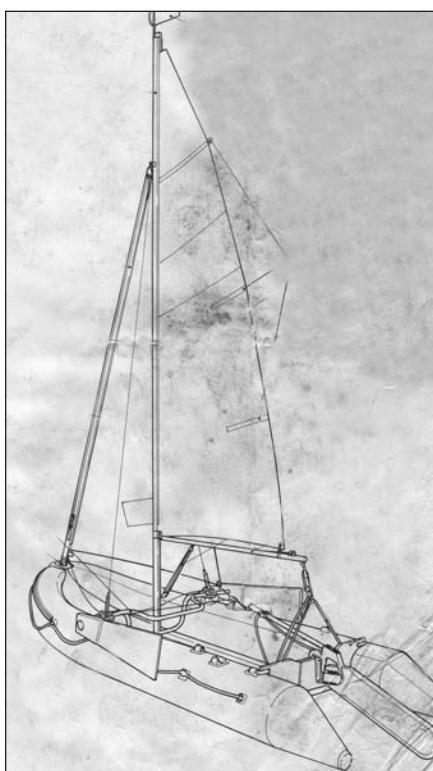
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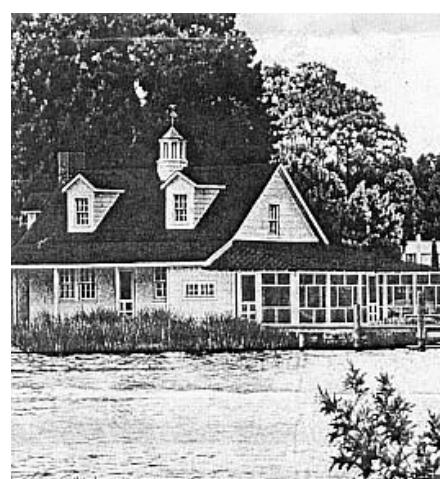
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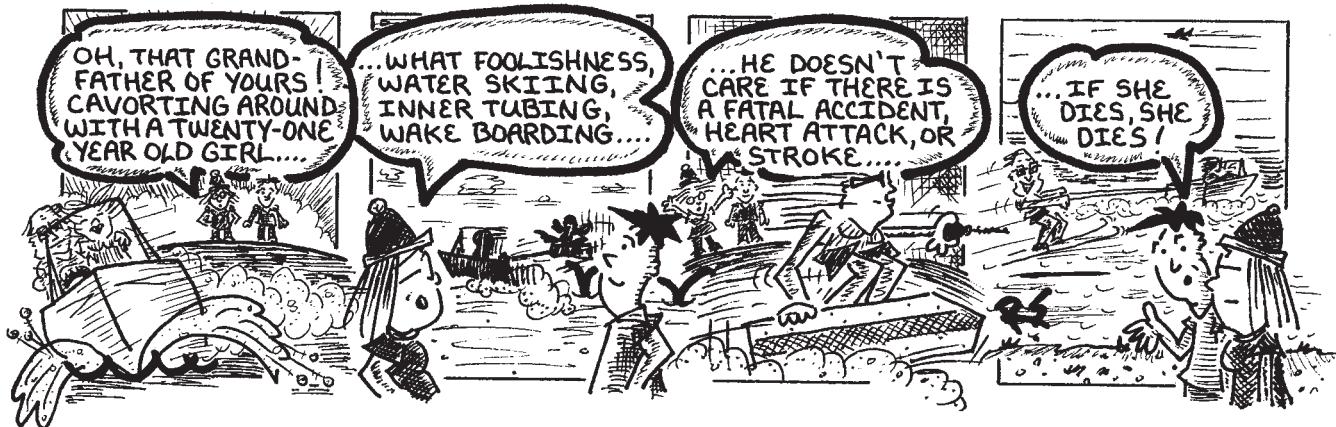
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Apr 12-15 Florida Gulf Coast Small Craft Festival, Cortez, FL \*  
Apr 26-29 Kent Island Boat Show, Kent Island, MD \*  
May 4-6 WNPR Craftshow, Farmington, CT  
May 26-28 Woodstock Craftshow, New Paltz, NY \*  
June 16-17 Clearwater Festival, Croton Point, NY \*  
June 23-4 Crafts at Rhinebeck, Rhinebeck, NY  
July 6-8 Berkshire Crafts Festival, Great Barrington, MA \*  
July 14-15 Lake Champlain Maritime Festival, Vergennes, VT \*  
July 20-22 Hammondsport, NY, Antique and Classic Festival \*  
July 27-29 Finger Lakes Boat Show, Skaneateles, NY \*  
Aug 3-5 Champlain Valley Folk Festival, Kingsland Bay, VT \*  
Aug 3-5 Antique & Classic Boat Show, Clayton, NY \*  
Aug 10-12 Maine Boats & Harbors, Rockland, ME \*  
Sep 7-9 Port Townsend Boat Festival, Port Townsend, WA \*  
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